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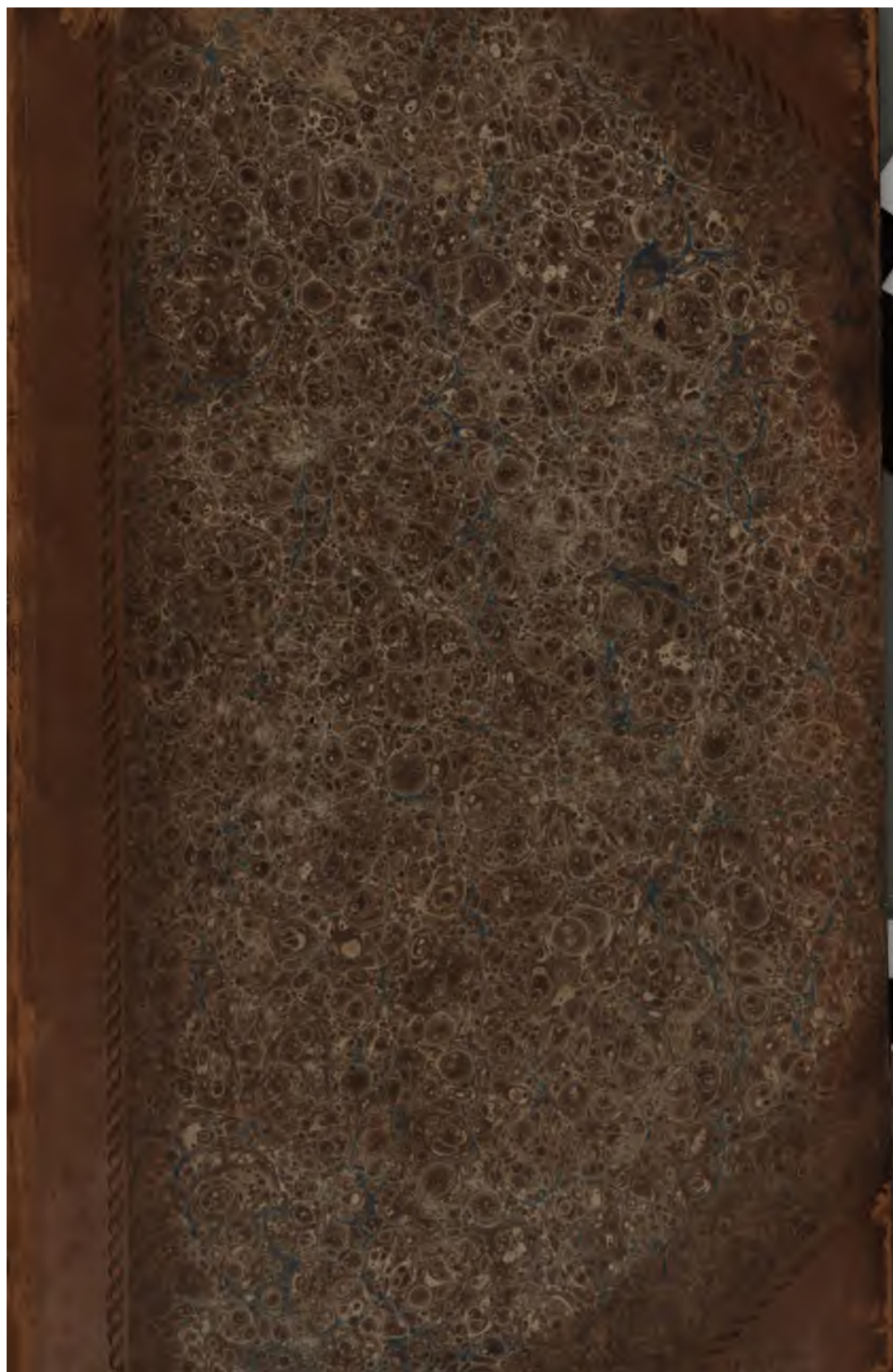
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AN  
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*L. H. 1826.*

AN

# ANSWER

TO THE

REV. JOHN DAVISON'S "INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN  
AND INTENT OF

**PRIMITIVE SACRIFICE,"**

&c.



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BY THE

**REV. JOHN EDWARD NASSAU MOLESWORTH, M.A.**

CURATE OF MILBROOK, HANTS, AND LATE OF TRINITY  
COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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"My son, God will provide himself a lamb."—GEN. xvii. 8.

"Behold the Lamb of God."—JOHN i. 36.

"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."—REV. xiii. 8.

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## P R E F A C E.

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"MR. BENSON, in his Hulsean Lectures, has preceded in attacking the theory which maintains the divine institution of Sacrifice; but Mr. Davison is not a less formidable assailant; and the advocates of that theory, it is reasonable to suppose, will not suffer it to be crushed by these vigorous enemies, without lifting a hand in its defence. The cares and duties of the Episcopal office are but little favourable to literary research; but it would much rejoice us should the present publication rouse the Prelate alluded to, the ablest champion of the opposite party, to take the field, convinced as we are that this keen intellectual contention, conducted as it would be by rare abilities, aided by profound erudition, and with a bold and manly candour, must finally contribute to the interests of Eternal Truth\*."

THE Review from which the above extract is taken, first drew my attention to Mr. Davison's work, and induced me to purchase it, for the purpose of more closely examining the ground-work of a theory which appeared to me highly objectionable. It cannot be necessary to describe what increase of cares, and occupations the Christmas holidays usually bring upon the father of a family of seven chil-

\* Quarterly Theological Review, No. iv. p. 293.



dren, and the Minister of a populous parish. These, together with various interruptions and peculiar disadvantages of situation, and, I shall frankly confess, much greater difficulty in the subject than I had anticipated, contributed to disappoint my sanguine expectation of furnishing an answer with very little trouble, and in a very short time. Mr. Davison, and those who have investigated minutely the points which he has discussed, will be sensible of the wide range, over which their examination necessarily leads the enquirer ; and of the continual temptations which it presents, alluring him to the pursuit of various interesting subjects remotely, but not essentially, connected with the main argument.

These circumstances will account for so long a period as upwards of three months being employed in the investigation of the subject, without leading the reader to expect from it too much. I mention them not for the purpose of averting critical indignation from myself in case of a failure ; but to shew, that there are some deficiencies of the advocate, as well as disadvantages under which the book is written, to which a failure might be attributed without considering the *cause itself* as indefensible.

It is the more necessary that I should make this observation, (not that I feel the slightest want of confidence in my positions), but because many of my arguments are original, and I believe new ; and it

has been my wish rather to bring a *fresh accession of evidence* to the question, than to dwell, any more than is absolutely necessary, upon those reasonings, which have been already urged with the greatest force, and by some of the most able theologians of our Church. Some of the distinctions which I have endeavoured to establish, if correct, may, I think, be further followed up so as to throw great light upon this subject, and may tend materially to elucidate several important portions of Scripture, which have respectively been employed, on the one hand by fanaticism, to weaken the Scriptural obligations to practice ; or on the other by Socinianism, to destroy the foundation on which we build the necessity of faith. Far, then, from deprecating the application of the critical ordeal to these, I rather solicit it, and am fully sensible, that I cannot bring them more completely to the test, than by subjecting them to the acute and scrutinizing mind of Mr. Davison. None will examine with more attention than myself his animadversions, should he consider this work worthy of notice, and not be disposed to coincide in my views. To affirm that I should not feel any vexation at being refuted, would be a ridiculous pretension to impartiality, and insensibility to public opinion ; but, if I know myself at all, I have not so involved my happiness in my success as an author, as to wish it to be promoted at the expense of the sacred interests of truth and religion. I bring the positions of this work before the public, and not



only do not deprecate, but CHALLENGE the trial of their soundness.

But some explanation is due upon one other point suggested by the passage from the Review, with which I have headed this preface. That learned and able prelate, whose work upon the Atonement, has conferred upon him such high, and well merited celebrity, has not only been directly attacked by Mr. Davison, but has also been specially called upon by the Reviewer, and perhaps expected by the public, to stand forth in defence of his opinions. That any individual should, under these circumstances, present himself as the antagonist of Mr. Davison, may appear to savour of presumption, and to call for some explanation?

This then is my plea. It seems to me scarcely just to urge, particularly in the present state of the Irish Church, this masterly writer, who has already most powerfully contributed his services in this question, to resume the weapons of controversy so long laid aside. Cincinnatus was not to be summoned even from his plough, till a consul, and an army were surrounded; and the trembling anticipations of panic, in the danger which threatened the beleaguered camp, beheld compromised the safety of Rome itself. Surely the champion of primeval atonement need not be diverted from the multifarious duties, and pressing demands of his high and arduous office, till it has

been shown, that the cause, which sunk not under the giant might of Spencer, and Warburton, is in such danger from the assaults of Messrs. Benson, and Davison, that it can be upheld by no other hand than MAGEE'S.

Let humbler individuals first be overthrown; and then indeed, that learned writer may be fairly called upon to maintain his opinions with fresh arguments. But till then it is unreasonable to demand the appropriation of the little leisure, which must be left to him amidst the discharge of his important duties, to the resumption of a controversy, of which he has exhausted almost every topic.

To these remarks it is scarcely necessary to add any declaration of the sentiments, with which I have perused his inestimable work on the Atonement. My humble tribute of applause could be but a drop in that mighty stream of admiration, which flows towards him from almost all theologians, of all denominations; and which will bear down his name to posterity, among those of the ablest defenders of our common faith.

But with whatsoever sentiments of respect, I regard his classical production; I have on one occasion found myself compelled to differ from him in my views of some parts of his subject, though not in his general conclusions. "Nullius addictus in verba



jurare magistri," has been my maxim. I have examined human authorities carefully, and where I found it necessary, have dissented from them freely, perhaps boldly; but I trust neither rashly, nor irreverently. I have appealed from them, whereinsoever I doubted, to the BIBLE. I have "*searched the Scriptures whether these things were so.*" May the research have been directed by *His* spirit, and the results tend to *His* glory, who hath caused "*whatsoever things were written aforetime,*" to be "*written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*"

MILLBROOK,

Feb. 3, 1826.

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## CHAPTER I.

### Outline of the principal positions.

"THE Positions," says Mr. Davison, "which I shall have ultimately to offer, as the result to which the investigation leads, are these:—

"First, That a *divine appointment* of sacrifice cannot be maintained, as the more probable account of the origin of that mode of worship.

"Secondly, That its *human institution*, if that be admitted, does not intrench in any manner upon the honour and sanctity of the Mosaic law; nor invade, much less invalidate, the essential doctrine of the Christian Atonement.

"Thirdly, That if any person shall still prefer to ascribe the first sacrifices to a divine appointment, there is yet no tenable ground for the belief that any revelation of their intent, in reference to the future sacrifice and atonement of the Gospel, was joined with them." p. 8.

Being desirous of bringing this discussion into as small a compass, as justice to its important topics will permit me, I shall decline entering into a close examination of Mr. Davison's *second* position. If he can *establish* his first position the believer has no alternative. He knows it to be an unquestionable fact, that God did under the law declare sacrifices to be both typical and expiatory rites; and therefore he cannot presume to affirm, that their being adopted rites must necessarily disqualify them for



his great purposes; or that their *human institution* could "intrench in any manner upon the honour and sanctity of the Mosaic law, or invade, much less invalidate, the essential doctrine of the Christian Atonement."

But it appears to me that this conclusion must rather be embraced by faith, than deduced by reason from the *probabilities* of the case. We should say "God has been pleased to adopt, and apply as a type of his most stupendous work, the scheme of man's redemption, this *human institution*; we cannot discover any satisfactory reasons (I am stating my view of it) for his *acceptance* of it previous to such adoption and application:—we should have expected too, that his chosen means of salvation,—an atoning sacrifice,—having been *determined* from the beginning, would have been *typified* from the beginning; especially as we find the *primeval practice* of sacrifice expressly recorded;—but he has willed it otherwise—'his thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor our ways as his ways.'"

In this, or some such manner, Mr. Davison's theory would, I am persuaded, be received into the reluctant minds of a *large majority* of Christians, *if* he could establish it. There is against it a general renitency of the common sense (Mr. D. perhaps will say prejudices) of believers, which creates in favour of the opposite opinion a strong presumption of its reasonableness, and consistency with the general tenor of Scripture. Two species of prediction, prophecy and type, announce the wonderful scheme of redemption. The latter, under the law, is universally acknowledged to be not less various,—not less circumstantial,—not less prominent—than the former. Surely the reason of many a Christian must be startled by the bare proposition, that of two equal streams of prophecy, both tending to the *same point*, the one took its rise from the *beginning* and from *divine revelation*; while the other not only did not

take its rise, for many ages afterwards—but did *not* derive its symbols from divine revelation, and owed its wondrous and circumstantial coincidences to nothing but mere human invention; which was afterwards borrowed by the Deity to typify the sacrifice of Christ.

“The positions” (said a venerable and learned friend, to whom I had mentioned my intention of opposing Mr. Davison’s theory,) “the positions, you oppose, seem to disunite the unbroken connection, which existed in the counsels of God concerning the ‘Lamb which was slain from the foundation of the world.’”

His words I am sure express the general sense of many, nay of most pious Christians; who have been accustomed to contemplate that chain of sacrificial type, which Mr. Davison abruptly severs from the Patriarchal world, as extending from the *fall* of the first, to the *victory* of the last Adam. But these are points on which I am anticipating the course of my argument.

The following are the principal positions which I shall endeavour to maintain against those of Mr. Davison.

I. There is sufficient evidence of the divine institution of sacrifice.

II. Sacrifice was used, and appointed by God to be used from the beginning as an expiatory rite.

III. The Patriarchs and other holy men had some revelation of the Redeemer as the *antitype* of sacrifice.

The proofs of the divine institution of sacrifice are twofold.

I. Its probability.

II. The direct, and indirect testimonies of Scripture.

The latter are, undoubtedly, the proofs on which the decision of the question principally depends; but the former are by no means unworthy of consideration, and of no slight weight in the scale.



The probability of the *divine institution* of sacrifice may be maintained. 1st. By arguments deducible from the consideration of God's nature, and of the general circumstances of the case.—2dly. By negative proofs—arising from the improbability of man's being the inventor of it.

## CHAPTER II.

*Probability of the divine institution of sacrifice maintained by arguments deducible from a consideration of God's nature, and of the general circumstances of the case.*

1. THE helpless and corrupt state of fallen man, engaged the attention of God immediately after the fatal transgression. The first recorded manifestations of his wisdom and goodness, as well as the continued exercise of them towards his undeserving creatures forcibly militate against the inference, that he would leave these helpless objects of his mercy without some revelation of the mode, in which they might, in the shame of their corruption and sinfulness, approach their offended but pure and holy God. The incapacity of human unassisted reason to form, or even to retain proper notions upon this momentous subject, is displayed in the general history of the Gentile world, and was strikingly demonstrated in that almost universal apostasy, which preceded the deluge. It is a supposition from which the sense of mankind will revolt, at least upon the first glance, that God should, in the *infancy* of the world, when man was without experience, suffer his worship, nay the grand type of redemption—to be

settled by the *casual* \* deductions of this frail and uncertain being.

But considering the rite even as a mere eucharistical offering, the probability is greatly in favour of the divine institution. Every *action* of the Deity *recorded*, furnishes ground for analogical deduction in supporting the conclusion; that He Himself “set in order” the rites of his infant Church. When we perceive Him *conversing* with the primitive inhabitants of the earth on various occasions—when we read of his interposition on emergencies, which we might, from inadequate notions respecting their inexperience and feebleness, be tempted to think almost unworthy the dignity of the Almighty—when we read of his condescending to teach them to *clothe* their nakedness, can we suspect that he deigned

\* I say *casual* deductions—for unless we suppose a constraint upon the will amounting in *effect* to a revelation, there is no saying what rite men might have devised; and according to Mr. Davison’s theory they would all have been equally proper.

I recollect to have seen in some work (but I cannot remember whose) that Abel might as probably have offered a dog, as a lamb. Nay more, he might have chosen as most precious of all a human victim.

“The Ruditas et simplicitas,” insisted upon by Spenser in defence of his theory (which is Mr. D.’s) are, (at least, in two respects, viz. as to the *end* and the *material* of sacrifice,) so described by him as to exhibit the first worshippers *completely ignorant* of what is suitable to God’s worship and service. Is it probable that he would leave persons so ignorant, to excogitate the mode in which he was to be propitiated, when their practice, however absurd, might and ought to influence their successors, and when their example though right in the first instance would clearly establish a *precedent*, from which their successors might claim a similar right, and exercise it in the greatest absurdities. The patriarchal *uniformity* of practice respecting sacrifice cannot easily be accounted for upon such grounds.

Spenser observes of the more enlightened Gentiles, that they expressed frequently their astonishment, “unde ritus tam tristis et a natura Deorum alienus in hominum corda veniret.”

“REVELATION WOULD HAVE REMOVED THE WONDER” is the brief and pithy reply of Dr. Magee.

not "to set in order" his worship \*? The very *body* is "more than raiment;" how much more, (if we claim for them the knowledge of future rewards, and Mr. D. does not deny it,) how much more the *soul*. Would God then instruct them to make garments, and not instruct them in the means by which they were to approach him? would he not reveal that *typical* rite by which they were to *cover* their inward deformity and shame, and thus to present themselves acceptably before him.

"In this (Gen. iii. 21.) short and memorable passage," says Mr. Davison, "we read an instance, I think a most affecting one, of the divine philanthropy; interposing by the dictation and provision of a more durable clothing to veil the nakedness, and cherish the modesty, of our fallen nature, by sin made sensible to shame. (Gen. iii. 7.) The decent covering of raiment is the retreat and the preservative of our sensitive and trembling, but not altogether degraded humanity. As such, the care of it, by an especial sanction, in the beginnings of the usages of our race, was an object worthy of the benevolence of God."

That the provision of raiment was an "instance of the divine philanthropy" cannot be questioned, but I must entirely dissent from that scanty theory which limits the divine philanthropy to the mere supply of temporal necessities, which affirms that God taught these "fallen," "sensitive," and "trembling" beings to "veil" their bodily nakedness, and to preserve their modesty by raiment; and yet ne-

\* Is this supposition consistent with the care displayed by God in *all ages* to preserve his worship uncontaminated, and free from the superstitious *inventions* of man, which degraded the Heathen systems? We may observe also, that, in subsequent ages, revelations of God's will, and of the *means* by which man was to seek forgiveness were given, and were adapted to our state and necessities. Is it reasonable to suppose that God, when frequently communicating with man upon other points, should give no revelation upon this momentous subject. Surely if such a revelation were ever needed, or ever probable, that, was of all other,—the time.

glected to provide a *covering* for their souls, and encouraged them to present themselves before him in the more perilous **NAKEDNESS** of *self-righteousness*. Mr. Davison is, however, more *consistent* in his view than Mr. Benson, his eloquent predecessor, in the denial of the divine institution of sacrifice, from whose work I subjoin a remarkable extract \*, which, to my apprehension contains an admission of the very point he is disputing; and, in fact, as forcibly affirms the divine origin, and expiatory character of sacrifice, as Dr. Magee's or Kennicott's arguments professedly maintaining, that the skins from which Adam's raiment was formed were the "skins of animals slain in sacrifice."

## 2. Supposing them to be merely eucharistical

\* "But whatever be the opinion we form with respect to the sentiments of Abel himself, we can scarce doubt that God in this action, and Moses, in introducing his account of the mode in which raiment was thus provided for man, had a peculiar view to the *manner of our redemption*, through the death of Christ. For nothing is more remarkable than the frequency of those passages in Scripture, by which the pardon of transgression is represented under the metaphor of *hiding* or of *covering* sin. Nor can it escape the recollection of any, that the skin of the victim was reserved in the Mosaic ritual, for the priest who was the medium of atonement. It cannot, therefore, be considered as a position altogether unreasonable to maintain, that the *method of obviating the natural consequences of the fall, by the shedding of blood*, was intended to be viewed by us, who live when the scheme of redemption has been completed, as having some connection with that more effectual shedding of blood by which God had, as we know, from the very foundation of the world, determined to cover also all our spiritual nakedness and shame. For in both instances it is the Lord God who himself interposes for our good, and in the latter, as in the former, a *raiment of righteousness* is appointed for our acceptance and use, more excellent than any we had provided for ourselves. It is not necessary, indeed, to view the subject in this light: for the introduction of the fact, 'that the Lord made coats of skins, and clothed them,' may be defended even in its ordinary and more unimportant sense. But when we regard it in combination with the other circumstances I have noticed, it seems to assume a more *definite character*, and there appears to be a *reason for its introduction*, which makes it not unworthy of being thus pressed upon our attention."—*Benson, Huls. Lect.* 1822, p. 245.



offerings, if they were discovered by reason, the *acceptance* of them would prove that they were discovered by *right* reason\*, and were, in themselves, (previously to this typical import,) or, at least, when accompanied with certain dispositions, agreeable to the Deity. Consequently, reason would infer that they ought still to be so offered. Though no longer applicable as types, it would be difficult to *account* for the *abrogation* of them. Of this, the *fulfilment* of the law by which (according to Mr. Davison) they were first *adopted* as *typical rites*, would appear an inadequate reason. For their anterior reasonableness as *eucharistical* offerings would still continue. That which was *per se*, or in virtue of certain concomitant dispositions *acceptable* to God before the Law, would continue to be so after it. The temporary *adoption* of them by the Law, would not alter their antecedent character. They had been sanctioned by God's *acceptance*, and also by his *requiring* them on solemn occasions, and might be recommended, therefore, even now, as external rites to devout worshippers of God. Can we suppose Mr. Davison prepared thus to recommend them to our practice, or as rites which would ever be *acceptable* to God? But consider them solely as *typical* rites, and as not otherwise acceptable, then the reason of their abrogation is clear—the *shadowy representation* has given place to the *reality*†.

\* From the manner in which Mr. Davison (pp. 103—106) applies St. Paul's account of *natural religion* to his argument, it would appear, that he considers sacrifice as the discovery of *natural religion*. That, which was *discovered* by natural religion, and *accepted* by the Author of religion, could scarcely become unfit for man to offer, or for the Deity to accept so long as the grounds or the obligations of natural religion shall remain unabrogated.

† Benson, in his Hulsean Lect, 1822, p. 241, is pleased to term those, who urge this argument, "weak." They may be so, but neither his contemptuous designation of them, nor his remarks, can abate the force of it. These remarks are mere assumptions, with far less evidence than that which supports the uniform im-

Thirdly, Animal sacrifices were confessedly not only prominent and principal parts of God's worship under the law, but also both expiatory, and typical of the great Atonement made by Jesus Christ. Is it a probable inference, that God left the rite, which so aptly, so circumstantially, so wonderfully adumbrated \* the mysterious peculiarities of this great event, to be groped for, and stumbled upon by the dim-sighted, and uncertain efforts of human reason? The circumstances and effects of Christ's death and sufferings were undoubtedly not ordained, to correspond with the circumstances of sacrifice; but sacrifice *prefigured* the circumstances and effects of Christ's death. Now, is it a reasonable supposition, that God did not ordain a rite so singularly representing events, which nothing but Revelation could suggest to the human mind? Is it probable that the simplicity of the primeval race should have invented it? Or is it in any greater degree probable, that God having pre-ordained the *great* sacrifice, should have omitted to institute that, which was so especially and admirably to adumbrate its mysteries? These are questions which may be put to common sense for decision; no learning or depth of thought is requisite for their consideration. In opposition to these, I submit to the reader the following attempt of Mr. Davison to account for the *wonderful coincidence* which is found between the peculiarities of the *figurative*, and the *mysteries* of the *real* sacrifice.

“Moreover the visible *coincidence*, which obtains

port of sacrifice. And this import admitted, at once solves the difficulty. That of those, who have urged this argument, many have not confined it within its proper limits, or stated the case with sufficient precision, I shall not dispute, but this is far from affecting the real strength of it.

\* God, to all his other dispensations, has unquestionably annexed some *sacramental* rites; does not analogy lead us to expect that this peculiarity would not be found wanting in the primeval worship. God gave no other dispensation without a sacrifice; analogy therefore would lead us to infer one here.



in the *Act of Sacrifice*, on the part of man, when he brought his victim to be slain, with the method of the Redemption appointed by God, creates no difficulty or embarrassment in the case. That *coincidence* is not the consequence of God's adaptation of his method to man's worship, nor of man's previous knowledge of God's design; but it is the consequence of his own constitution of things. For consider the case. The *death* of the victim, in man's worship, was introduced in correspondence with, and conformity to, God's *Law*, which had made *death* the \* wages of sin. Now, that God, in framing the method of our redemption, by the *death* of Christ, had a regard to the sentence of his own law, is undeniable; inasmuch as the Redeemer's death is explained, in Scripture, to be the positive counter-vailing ransom to the decreed penalty of the Law. But this resulting correspondence, between the *redeeming death* of Christ and the *penal death* of the law, is altogether the effect of God's own order and constitution of things—the plan of his Mercy adapted to the sanction of his Justice. And thus, although man's sacrifice happened to exhibit a victim's death, and a victim's death, in the Gospel, is the vehicle of our redemption, it is manifest that man had not the *most distant* foreknowledge of that mystery, nor any notions, in his Sacrifice, to which God *adapted* the remedial provision; except so far as those notions expressed the condemning sentence of the Law; whilst it was the sole work and privilege of God to appoint, and reveal, the Expiation to be effected by the death of the Redeemer†.”

\* If Mr. D. thinks himself justified in assuming this cause of the victim's death, he cannot surely stop short of expiatory sacrifice, he cannot at least upon his own data object to his opponent's assuming that this “*conformity and correspondence*” being so *clearly* understood by the first offerers must have led them to the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice.

† Davison on Sacrifice, p. 141.

Mr. Davison must, upon consideration, see that all this is any thing but *proof* of the *coincidence* "being the consequence of God's own institution of things," and not of a designed, and revealed representation. That God did not "*adapt* his remedial provision to any notions" framed by man "in his sacrifice" is very true. But this does not *account* for the extraordinary coincidence that man's sacrifice "*happened* to exhibit a victim's death;" neither does it account for the *acceptance*\* of sacrifice, and the manifested approbation of the offerer without giving him a notion that "a remedial provision" was indispensably necessary to his being *justified* in the sight of God.

4. Christ is the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" he suffered for the sins of the *whole* world—he is the "only Mediator"—without him "NO MAN cometh to the Father"—he is the pre-ordained sacrifice; and, as Mr. D. admits, is the subject obscurely set forth in the famous prophecy of the *seed that shall bruise the serpent's head*.

If, then, God had his sacrifice in view, if sacrifice did afterwards unquestionably typify his atonement, if God did give that *promise* of the seed, and if sacrifice be among the *earliest records*, why should it be supposed to be divested of its typical character? why should express prophecy *point out the seed*; and why should God *accept* of sacrifice, and not give it to the sacrificer as a type and pledge of that Redeemer, which it afterwards adumbrated. Why in short, if ALL men were interested in the one Mediator and Saviour, why should there be any *period* at which, or any *justified man* to whose faith, sacrifice should not present a sacramental type of the Redeemer. No reason, at least none that I have met with, has been assigned for which God should have thought fit to

\* The nature of that *acceptance* is described by St. Paul, Heb. xi. 4., which I shall have occasion to notice hereafter, adds great weight to this argument.



discernible in all God's dispensations seems to oppose itself strongly to the notion, that he should in *any one part* have omitted to display *some* intimation, however obscure, of that leading and characteristic doctrine, which is, as it were, the very *spine* of the whole, and from which no part can be separated without at once being paralyzed and deprived of its vital principle: I mean the doctrine, that man's imperfect righteousness *could not render him or his gifts acceptable* to God, but he is bought with a price, without blood there is *no remission*.

Lastly. Let the *cumulative* force of *all* these probabilities be taken into consideration, and they will be found I think to produce a conviction of the divine institution and expiatory character of sacrifice in the minds of most Christians, which the *silence* of Moses in his account of Abel's sacrifice, will not weaken, and with which conviction it would, indeed be far from "neutral in its import." What that silence really proves, I shall shew hereafter, when we examine the nature of the *historical testimony*. I now proceed to offer a few remarks upon the negative proofs of sacrifice being a divine institution, or the improbability of its being man's invention \*.

\* The universality of sacrifice is a fact affording a strong presumption of the divine institution of it. I do not enter upon it having nothing to add, to what has been already said upon the point. See *Magee on Atonement*, No. 55. and Disc. II. There are some excellent remarks upon the *universality* of sacrifice as irreconcilable with its human origin, in *Richie's Pec. Doct.* p. 147. et seq.

Plato, in his *Epinomis*, has expressed his sense of the incompetency of man to discover the means of propitiating the Deity, and as a reason for which the established rites of religion should not be altered, uses the following remarkable argument. \* ἡ δυνατόν εἶδεναι τη θνητῇ φύσει τῶν τοιούτων περι.

## CHAPTER III.

*On the improbability of man's inventing sacrifice.*

MR. Davison has produced the following arguments to shew, that it was by no means improbable, that man, without any divine injunction, prompted by reason alone should have offered sacrifice "as a confession of guilt."

"In this sense of sacrifice; in its use as a confession of guilt; I venture to believe that, after a candid review, it will not be thought either inexplicable, or any paradox at all. Consider the first family of the human race, and how they stood with God. When He had denounced death as the punishment due to man's original transgression, and thereby given him to understand that death was the wages of *all* other sin; when He had made this doom the great penal sanction of his law, and the fearful sign of man's demerit in his disobedience; how can it be said that it was a thing so remote from the ideas of the worshipper, that he should make confession of his guilt, and of the deserved penalty of his transgression, by presenting a victim to be slain, as the appropriate, but interposed, symbol of his contrition and self-condemnation? The substitution of the victim was surely no improbable, no extravagant, no very devious effort either of nature, or reason, when nature was awakened, and reason prompted, by the sentence of the divine law; that law which held its terrors before him, to teach the offender by what measure to estimate the desert of his transgression, and almost to suggest the symbols by which he might most adequately express the justice



of his fore-doomed condition. As the representative of a forfeited life, the creature slaughtered was a confession made to the divine justice neither inapt to its object, nor arbitrary in its moral import. The action performed, and the sentiment implied, had a determinate correspondence. The one would exhibit the other. The sentiment was just; the representation of it natural. The Holocausts and victims of the primitive age, would not, therefore, in this first sense of them, be so perplexed in their design, that we should be obliged to resort to a supernatural appointment to account for their introduction\*."

I must aver, that after having, to the best of my ability, given Mr. Davison's statements and arguments a "candid consideration," I am disposed to pronounce the matter "inexplicable" upon the principles which he has adopted; and certainly very far from being explained by his attempt†. On the contrary he appears to have produced not only a very artificial, and unnatural account, but also an account, which, to give it much probability, seems to require an admission of that postulate of Warburton's which, in a preceding page, he has himself justly condemned; namely, the "*imperfection of language*‡," and a consequent necessity for representation by action. For, not to mention many other improbabilities, we must suppose Abel to have been

\* Davison on Sacrifice, p. 21, 22, 23.

† No *benefit* appears to be proposed by Mr. D. as the expected result of sacrifice so offered.

‡ "Language," says Dr. Magee, "which Scripture expressly states to have been derived to our first parents from Divine instruction, cannot be supposed so defective, in those terms that related to the worship of God, as to have rendered it necessary for Abel to call in the aid of actions to express the sentiment of gratitude or sorrow; and still less likely is it that he would have resorted to that *species* of action, which, in the eye of reason, must have appeared displeasing to God, the slaughter of an unoffending animal." *Magee on Atonement*. Disc. II. Sec. also No LIII.

very deficient in the use of language, if he were unable to express his "contrition, and self-condemnation," without shedding the blood of an innocent lamb. Neither do I perceive the aptitude of the symbol, or the connection which could present itself to the mind of the offerer between the death of an *unoffending* \* animal, and the sentence due to *guilty* man†.

The improbability of the human invention of this rite has been amply discussed by various writers, and the principal arguments may be seen in Dr. Magee's work upon the Atonement. They are generally known and I shall not enumerate them. But I wish to adduce one, which I have not observed to have been previously urged. It is this: that a strong degree of improbability opposes itself to the supposition, that Abel could have been led by reason, to offer animal sacrifice; because the natural reason of a good man, instead of expecting to propitiate God, would discover greater grounds to apprehend his displeasure, and must have shrunk with horror at the bare idea of inflicting upon an *innocent* animal *death*, which had been denounced as a CURSE AND PUNISHMENT upon himself. This very consideration alone would have been sufficient to deter a good man, and alone, I contend, is sufficient to explode the fanciful theory of Mr. Davison respecting man's offering sacrifice as a symbol of "contrition,

\* But how forcibly does the aptitude press itself on our reason, when we contemplate it as the type of our *sinless* Redeemer, our *Lamb without blemish and without spot*.

† "By this reason," (says Jeremy Taylor, *Duct. Dub.* p. 356) "we are taught that God must be worshipped, yet that cannot tell us *how* God will be worshipped," &c.

Against this cannot be urged what Mr. D., when discussing the subject of will worship, claims as concessions of Taylor's opposed to his own views. For here man has no principles, no previous knowledge to *argue* upon, no attributes of God from which he might *deduce* an inference that such offerings could cause him to be *pleased* with us.



and self-condemnation." Had Mr. Davison at once maintained the position, which he justly rejects, namely, that man had invented *expiatory* and *vica-rious* sacrifice, it would have appeared of the two infinitely the more probable; for under the consciousness of guilt described by Mr. D., one can scarcely assign, for man's inflicting upon another that death, which had been denounced as a *curse* upon himself, a motive so probable, as a *superstitious expectation*, that *the suffering of the victim would be accepted instead of his own*. But if such were Abel's expectation, Mr. Davison admits, that he must have derived it from revelation; it could not have been the discovery of reason. And the *acceptance* of it confirms this admission. For it would unquestionably have been at variance with the analogy of revealed religion, that God should teach man that a *sacramental* rite could be a human ordinance.

Having stated this argument, I shall close this portion of our subject by adverting to Mr. Davison's remarks upon "Man's right over the life of the creature, and upon the inference that our first parents were clothed in the skins of animals *slain in sacrifice*." Mr. Davison neither concedes the conclusion, nor refutes the reasonings of Archbishop Magee, respecting the date of the permission of animal food to man. I may therefore fairly claim as a position hitherto established, that it was subsequent to the Deluge. And being so, it is highly improbable that man should presume, and he could have no right to inflict death upon an animal without an express permission so to do. But an *express permission* to inflict death for the purpose of sacrifice cannot reasonably be separated from the positive institution of sacrifice by divine command. Mr. D. would oppose this inference by denying the premises, and claiming to man the *right* of inflicting death upon the animal creation without any *special* permission, and contend that it was conveyed in the *original* grant of "Do-

minion over the living creatures." The following are his statements and reasonings.

"Declining this larger question as to the first grant of animal food, and the true date of it, I answer that, whether for food, or no, the dominion over the living creatures was unquestionably a branch of the original grant of the Creator. 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living creature that moveth upon the earth.' This is the primary charter, these the large terms of it, from the Sovereign Lord of all, conveyed to man. Here is dominion over the living creatures positively and in form conceded to him. But this is not all. For that other preceding grant to replenish and subdue the earth, and occupy it to his use, could scarcely be turned to effect, without the liberty of subduing those, the wild, and otherwise the rival possessors of his domain. Their lives, no doubt, were submitted to him for the furtherance of his natural accommodation in completing his mastery and possession of the earth\*."

Mr. Davison does not contend that this grant conveyed the permission, to take the lives of animals for the purpose of *food*; for if he had, he would have been contradicted in the very next verse, in which God expressly tells man that he had given him "*every herb for meat*." He states that the permission is generally conveyed in the words "have dominion," and specifies the object, viz. to enable him to *subdue* the earth, and to "*subdue those, the wild and otherwise the rival possessors of his domain*." The following observations will, I think, demonstrate, that Mr. Davison's supposed grant does not merely rest on assumption without proof, but is also distinctly negated by the facts of the case.

\* Davison on Sac. pp. 23, 24.



1st. Neither of the terms rendered in our translation "*subdue*" and "*have dominion*" (See Ainsworth on the verse, and also the LXX) necessarily conveys a licence to take life. They simply imply man's rule and lordship, investing him merely with *possession* of the earth, and *superiority* over all created beings.

2dly. The grant was given *before the Fall*, in PARADISE; where we have no authority to assume, that any such *rivalry* could exist between man and the animal creation, as would justify him in INTRODUCING DEATH into that region of *life and happiness*; or as would lead them to molest him. *Hostility* between man and beast is no where to be *traced*, till the serpent occasioned the Fall; and seems to be a notion at variance with the description of man's state.

3dly. The recorded fact (Gen. ii. 19.) of the beasts being *brought* to Adam to be named is positively opposed to such a notion.

4thly, If we could even consent to waive these arguments, and concede that the grant implied permission to take, in self-defence, the lives of the *wild beasts*, still this would be far from amounting to a permission, to take the life of an *inoffensive lamb*, without an adequate occasion, which occasion, as being connected with his worship, could be determined by only God—men could not presume to do it without express permission.

The argument built upon the *probability* (for positive proof is not here claimed) that the skins (Gen. iii. 21.) in which our first parents were clothed, were those of animals slain in sacrifice; Mr. Davison has treated with a scorn scarcely decorous, considering the high character of Dr. Kennicott: and the feebleness with which Mr. Davison has sustained his own position.

"They argue," says he, "that God would not have given the lives of the animals merely for the sake of raiment, that the skins could have been none other than the remains of sacrifice; and sacrifice

must have been commanded; otherwise the raiment could not have been obtained. *These things have been supposed and deliberately said\**. What we read and see is the raiment mentioned, and not the sacrifice; and a direction given for the one and not for the other."

We certainly do, as Mr. Davison observes, "see the raiment mentioned, and not the sacrifice," &c.; but I must remind him, that we do *not* see, that raiment is the OBJECT, *for which the animals were put to death*. That the skins of dead animals were used for clothing is plainly stated. But the PURPOSE, for which those animals were slain, is not stated at all. Neither raiment nor sacrifice are represented in this passage as the PURPOSE, for which life was taken. Raiment then, even under Mr. Davison's condemnation and contempt, I must contend, does not appear the purpose for which, it is probable, that the animals were slain. We are no where told, that animals were *slain for clothing*. We have but ONE KNOWN, and that A MOST DISTINCTLY RECORDED, *purpose*, for which, in those times, animals were put to death AND SKINNED; and that is SACRIFICE. The *incidental evidence* then, (which I shall hereafter shew is the species of evidence to be expected here) directly leads to the inference, that *sacrifice must have been the PURPOSE* for which the animals had been slain, before their skins were used for clothing. I would also here suggest—the *significance* of God's *covering* the nakedness of man's *body* with the *skin* of *that sacrifice*, which typified the *covering* of the nakedness of his *soul*—the propriety which it confers upon that legal metaphor of *hiding* and *covering* sin, so eloquently touched upon by even Mr. Benson †; in the passage I have before quoted; and also

\* Dr. Kennicott's First Dissertation.

† Mr. Benson has *positively asserted*, in the face of Levitical practice, and of the *engrafted* character of the Law, that the skin of



the *probable* connection of our first parents being thus clothed, with the *reservation*\* of the skin of the burnt-offering for the Levites. I would respectfully submit these considerations to Mr. Davison, and ask him whether he may not think, upon reflection, that at least something of the superciliousness, with which he has rejected the learned Kennicott's opinion, might not have been abated; and whether the "deduction," which, he authoritatively declares, "is to be made from the text," be really so very *plain*.

The arguments which support the probability of the divine institution of sacrifice, have an equal tendency to prove its expiatory character. Because, the *typical* nature of the rite being thus inferred, it may be reasonably assumed, that the type was not deficient in a quality at least *analogous* to that, which forms the *principal* feature of its antitype. This resemblance too between the type and the antitype, being clearly recognized under the law, cannot be supposed to be wanting under the antecedent dispensation, if under that dispensation the *typical* character of the rite itself be acknowledged.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

##### *Historical Evidence of the Divine Institution of Sacrifice. General Remarks.*

MR. DAVISON begins with stating, "that there is a total silence in Holy Writ, as to the rise of sacrifice."

the burnt offering was originally consumed.--We must have better authority for that, than *assertion*.—See *Hulsean Lec.* 1822, p. 236.

\* See *Shuckford's Connect.* Vol. i. Book II.

Hence, he argues, that "this *silence* of the Scripture history, neutral in the narrative, is far from neutral in its import. For had sacrifice been instituted of God; had it been the solemn rite and character with which religion from the beginning was invested by a special revelation, most reasonable is it to think, that some notice of such an authoritative institution of it would have been preserved, and transmitted to memory, for the instruction of after times."

That this silence of Holy Writ is not neutral in its import we both agree, but with respect to its real import we most decidedly differ; as will be hereafter seen. I apprehend also, that Mr. Davison will not entirely coincide with me in the *immediate* inference, which I deduce from the very *silence* \* of the narrative. The public must judge between us.

Sacrifice, whether originally revealed by God, or invented by the primeval worshippers, was to the Jews the most *important* and *prominent* of all their religious rites. And, as Moses wrote for the *information* of the *Jews*, it can scarcely be supposed, that he would leave them in *ignorance* of the origin of this interesting rite, whether that origin were *divine* or *human*. The *prima facie* consideration of this narrative brings us *immediately* to one, or to both of these conclusions. 1. *The origin of the rite was already notorious to those to whom the narrative was addressed.* Or, 2dly, *Moses did not consider the history of the primitive or the patriarchal age as the place, in which the information required was to be given.*

By a particular investigation of other portions of

\* Davison on Sac. pp. 9, 10.

† Mr. Davison has, I think, greatly overstated the *silence* when he affirms that, antecedently to the Law, "there is not the most distant disclosure made, directing us to *infer* how it (sacrifice) was originally introduced." That he has so overstated it, will appear as we proceed in our examination of the historical evidence.



the Mosaic history, bearing upon these two positions, we shall, I trust, be able to determine satisfactorily the *true import* of this *silence* of Holy Writ. In the course of this investigation I shall shew, that Moses, antecedently to the promulgation of the law, and under it spoke of sacrifice in terms denoting the *notoriety* of its divine origin; that he must have been sensible, that his countrymen would *necessarily presume* its divine origin, unless he should *expressly caution them to the contrary*; and that the *scope* of his history of the primitive and patriarchal times by no means required any *positive declaration of it*. These propositions, if they can be substantiated, will, I conceive, establish the divine institution of sacrifice, upon that species of evidence, which from the nature of the case we might reasonably expect to find.

"Though Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy stood as separate books in the private copies used by the Jews in the time of Josephus, they were written by their author Moses in *one continued work* and still remain in that form, in the public copies read in the Jewish Synagogues \*."

This fact, though well known, has not been sufficiently considered in the discussion of our present subject †. An erroneous impression seems to pre-

\* Bishop of Winchester's Elem. Christ. Theol. P. 5. Vol. i.

† Mr. Davison appears to me to have entirely lost sight of the fact that the book of Genesis is part of *one continued work*, and that it was a record intended for the instruction of persons to whom the Law had been *previously* delivered, and who had formed determinate notions upon the origin and intent of sacrifice. He says, "Men have looked through the law of Moses, to the antecedent religion. They have made the one the image of the other. Of this identity we possess no evidence."—*Dav. on Sac.* p. 33.

To the former part of the charge I plead guilty; I do look, and think men ought to look, through the Law of Moses to the antecedent religion. And, though I have not made the one the *image* of the other, I maintain that the latter is a *part*, and a *principal part* of the former. Instead of the primitive sacrifice being *adopted* and *exalted* by the Law, I contend, and, I have the authority of St. Paul, that

vail, that Genesis is to be looked upon as a *separate* book, and as published *before the oral* delivery of the law. The reverse is the truth. There is abundant evidence, that the *completion* of this "*one continued work*" the Pentateuch, was long *subsequent* to the oral promulgation of the law. Michaelis conjectures that each event of the Exodus, &c., was recorded as it happened.

Faber argues that the Pentateuch was written "*synchronically*" with the Exodus. The history appears to contain internal evidence, that it was not completed, or at least not produced as a public document, till a short time before the decease of Moses, when he commanded it to be deposited in the Ark \*. I do not mean to contend, that the facts

the Law was ADDED to the patriarchal dispensation. Hence I infer that sacrifice had the same *general* intent under the Law, as under the patriarchs. The general intent of animal sacrifice was always the same; viz. atonement or restoration to God's favour. Its *peculiarity* under the Law was its various application to the purposes of maintaining the theocracy—of preserving the people from idolatry, and of setting forth under different forms typical descriptions of the Great Atonement to be made "in the fulness of time." Hence I do hold, that we are "to look through the law to the antecedent religion" and to judge of the light in which sacrifice must have appeared to the Jews.

\* Deut. xxxi. 9—xi. 24-26. comp. 2 Kings xxii. and xxiii. *Fab. Hor. Mos.* vol. i. 321.

The nature of the narrative is opposed to the fanciful opinion of Eusebius and others, that Moses wrote the book of Genesis, while keeping the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law, in the wilderness of Midian. "But," says Mr. Hartwell Horne, "the more probable opinion is that of Theodoret, which has been adopted by Moldenhawer, and most modern critics, viz. that Moses wrote this book after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, and the promulgation of the Law from mount Sinai: for previously to his receiving the divine call, related in Exodus iii. he was only a private individual, and was not endued with the Spirit of Prophecy. Without that Spirit he could not have recorded with so much accuracy the history of the creation, &c." *Horne's Introduc.* vol. iv. 4.

All that portion of the work previous to the call of Moses, was a rapid sketch of the history of the world, and particularly the ancestors of the chosen people. It is merely the introductory part of



contained in the book of Genesis might not have been orally communicated to the Jews at the time of, or even previously to, the promulgation of the law; but the written narrative, which we have, was posterior to that promulgation. Moses, therefore, must have known, that the Jews would take their opinions of the origin of sacrifice either from their own previous notions upon the subject, or from the character in which it was set forth to them under the law. The former of these would be at least as likely; indeed (as the fact of Gentile opinions upon the rise of their sacrifices will prove) much more likely, to lead them to attribute it to divine than to human institution. And the latter would decidedly cause them to regard it as of 'divine origin.'

The view then, with which Moses might be expected to mention the institution of Sacrifice would be, to correct an *erroneous* prepossession. The prepossession of the Jews would be in favour of the Divine institution; consequently, if this were the *true state of the case*, he would have no *occasion* to inform them upon the point; the narrative would probably be silent. But that silence would lead us to the inference, that the divine institution was presupposed, and notorious. But, if it were of *human* invention, it would *then* and *then only* be necessary, that Moses should expressly declare it, to correct the previous opinion of its divine origin, which the law would almost unavoidably lead the Jews to adopt.

These points will be farther discussed in the answers to the three following questions:—

the work, and not a separate history. But the time, at which the book of Genesis was *composed* is not material to the strength of my position; it was unquestionably *promulgated* as a national document, *after* the giving of the Law; and Moses must have been capable of judging, whether the Law would predispose the Jews to attribute sacrifice to divine or human institution, when he expressly mentioned neither.

I. In what light does Moses appear to speak of Sacrifices *previously* to the giving of the law, and also under it?

II. In what sense would the general tenor of the law *pre-dispose* the Jews to interpret those passages, in which no mention was made of the origin of Sacrifice?

III. Is there any thing in the nature and scope of his history of the primitive times, which should call for an express declaration of the origin of Sacrifice, if it were instituted by God?

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## CHAPTER V.

I. *In what light does Moses appear to speak of Sacrifice previously to the giving of the law, and also under it?*

1. I deny, that there is any one *period* either before, or under the law, which can be pointed out as *fixing the first declaration of the divine sanction*, as a NEW, AND HERETOFORE UNKNOWN attribute of Sacrifice. It cannot be said of any one passage, Moses here distinctly establishes a *new sanction* to Sacrifice, —he here *discovers* to the Israelites the divine sanction, as *given* to that, which *before* rested upon *human* authority. The passage of Levit. xvii. 11. adduced by Mr. Davison for this purpose, has not the slightest claim to such a character; Sacrifice, before that, had been spoken of again and again, both as a *commanded*, and an *atoning* rite. And I shall presently shew, that, far from assisting Mr. Davison's cause, it establishes a point, which, if established, he *admits* to be fatal to his theory.

2. No instance has been adduced, in which Moses even hints at Sacrifice being a *human* invention.



3. There are two remarkable cases in which, antecedently to the giving of the law, Moses has occasion to mention Sacrifice; in both of which, he speaks, to my judgment, as plainly as possible, as under the belief that Sacrifice was understood by both *Jews and heathens*, to be of divine institution. The two passages are Exod. v. 3. "Let us go, we pray thee, three days journey into the desert, and Sacrifice unto the Lord our God; LEST HE FALL UPON US WITH PESTILENCE, OR WITH THE SWORD." And Exod. x. 25, 26. "Thou must give us also Sacrifices and" (even \*) "burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we KNOW NOT WITH WHAT we must serve the Lord until we come thither."

30 In the former case he tells Pharaoh, that the consequence of his omitting this rite will be the infliction of most terrible punishments. But such punishments could hardly be menaced for the neglect of a rite, which was of mere human institution, or to one which was mere will-worship, such as Mr. Davison represents it †. It is true, that in this case there was a special and particular command; but Moses appears, not to refer Pharaoh to *that*, but to

\* Dr. Richie observes, that "In these two passages Moses and Aaron speak of Sacrificing not as a new, and uncommon thing, but as an usual mode of worship, with which Pharaoh was as well acquainted as themselves; consequently a thing that was not a late, or new invention. In the first passage no particular Sacrifice is mentioned: in the latter, *burnt-offerings* are the only species which is taken notice of."—*Pec. Doct.* 142.

His arguments for adopting the translation "*even*," which his last position requires, are stated in his note (u), pages 138, 139.

† I may observe too, that the *dreaded* visitation with *sword* or *pestilence*, does not very clearly correspond with Spenser's, and Mr. Davison's notion of Sacrifices having the "*anterior character*" of *Gifts*, such as they are described by these writers. If *Gifts* at all, they were of the nature of Bribes, to avert the above terrible calamities.

rely upon his comprehension of the threat from the *universal* persuasion, that Sacrifice was a divine institution, a *commanded* rite, and that neglect of it would incur signal punishment.

In the latter case, Moses informs Pharaoh, that he *knows not what* he is to Sacrifice. And surely this creates a presumption, that he meant to hold out Sacrifice as under the divine institution. Because, here was a case unprovided for by the ordinary rule of practice; and Moses could not presume to say, without *special authority*, what victims would be required. Yet surely, if he believed, that Sacrifice was the *invention of human reason*, and that the Patriarchs were justified in *establishing* this rite without divine authority; surely, he might exercise the same liberty, and determine by reason, when he had received no directions, what was proper to be offered for this particular occasion. They would be both cases of will-worship, and the precedent of the former would justify their proceeding upon the same principle in the latter. The same reason which was permitted to *institute* Sacrifice, might surely be permitted to *determine* what *sort* of Sacrifice should be offered in the wilderness.

From these cases before the law, if we turn to the language under the law, we find Moses uniformly claiming divine authority for the ordinances he delivered. He no where pretends to be the originator of any rite; every one has the *divine* sanction. But God may *adopt* a human rite, and give it his sanction. Yet where is there a *hint*, that he has done so. He speaks of Sacrifice, indeed, as a rite already known to man; and it may be asked why, if its divine origin were already understood, he should expressly mention its being now authorised, and commanded by him?

To this we may reply—that no where does Moses appear to mention Sacrifice with a view of *stamping* it with a sanction, which it *did not already possess*.



He is giving a *national code*: and he is careful to declare, that it rested upon no human authority, but claimed their most unreserved submission to its dictates. He frequently, and pointedly mentions the divine sanction as stamped upon *every portion* of it, not upon Sacrifice in *particular*. Sacrifice is, indeed, a prominent feature in this code. But Sacrifice is not mentioned to enjoin the mere *observance* of it upon divine authority; but to determine the *manner* and *place* in which, and the *persons* by whom it is, *under this national code*, to be offered. It is not said the Lord hath *commanded* you to *offer sacrifices*; but "*If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord, ye shall bring,*" &c.—and "*If his offering be a burnt Sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male,*" &c. (Levit. i. 2 and 3, comp. Exod. xviii. 12, xx. 24, xxiv. 5.) The former clause of these passages indicates their previous acquaintance with Sacrifice, the latter the quality of the victim, the place for offering, and the like.

He stamps *Sacrifice* here with no *new* authority; but he affixes the divine sanction to the new *rule* and *ritual* of Sacrifice. Sacrifice itself he mentions as familiarly *known* to them, *not through the medium of the book of Genesis*, (for that I contend they had not yet seen) but from *tradition and practice*.

The great simplicity of the Patriarchal worship, the parental nature of their regulations, and their frequent communion with God, sufficiently account for the absence of any written code of religious observance; while the *uniformity* of their worship, the recorded *instructions* of God given to them on occasions out of the ordinary rule of sacrificial practice, and his continued and manifested superintendence over their welfare, are evidences of an active interposition, quite incompatible with the notion, that he left to *their discovery* the rite, which was the *prominent* feature both under the primitive dispensation, and under the law; and which, finally, was

the *most important and significant type* of the atonement by the blood of Jesus.

But when the Israelites had multiplied, were released from the sway of Egypt, and had become a *nation*; then the Law was given. The primitive, and significant rite of sacrifice was still retained, but its principle was applied to a more *diversified and complex code of transgressions*; adapted to the situation of the people, and to the counsels of the Almighty. A solemn *record* was to be put forth, establishing a national code of religion and polity, by which the Israelites were to be guided then, and in future ages; when Moses should be no more, and till the Lord should raise up a "prophet like unto Moses." To ensure obedience and reverence to this code the Divine sanction was distinctly stamped upon every *part* of it. Man was not to *add to*, or *take away* from it, much less to be supposed to have *originated* it. Therefore Moses frequently says, the *Lord spake*, the *Lord commanded*, and the like. But while the previous history speaks of sacrifice, as the chief, almost sole religious observance, without any *period* being mentioned in which it *assumed* a typical character; the Law, in no single instance, represents it as a rite, which then for the first time had received the sanction of Divine *command*.

These circumstances offered a strong presumption that Moses spoke of sacrifice as *universally* known to be of Divine origin;—a presumption, indeed, so strong, that, in my opinion, nothing but the *express declaration* of its being of human institution; or some decisive proof that the *scope* of the history of the primitive times *indispensably demanded* its mention, can set it aside. The former, we know, is not to be found. The latter I shall discuss under our third question. But we must first enter upon those points, which were proposed as the second question.



## CHAPTER VI.

II. *In what sense would the general tenor of the Law pre-dispose the Jews to interpret those passages of the Primeval and Patriarchal history in which no mention was made of the origin of Sacrifice?*

IN considering the points suggested by the preceding question, we have unavoidably anticipated, in some degree, the answer to the present.

The impression on the mind of Moses, which I have endeavoured to shew, precluded the necessity of his directly mentioning the origin of sacrifice in the book of Genesis, will be found to rest upon a *just estimate of the feelings and prepossessions of the Jews.*

The Levitical Law was the place in which the Jews would naturally seek the authority of Sacrifice; and we have no *proof* that even the substance of the facts recorded in the book of Genesis was related to them previously to the promulgation of the Law. It appears to me a complete subversion of the matter to suppose, that a Jew would deduce the origin and intent of sacrifice from the cursory account given by Moses of Abel's sacrifice, when all the associations of his mind recently excited, both by *repeated declarations of the Divine sanction, and by sensible tokens of the presence of the Deity, strongly, almost irresistibly, led him to regard not only Sacrifice, but every part of his ritual as of Divine authority.*

What inference, then, would a Jew draw from the simple statement, that "Abel also brought the *firstlings* of his flock and of the *fat* thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and unto his offering?"

The *firstlings* and the *fat thereof* were sacrificial terms \*. The import of these was determinate, and perfectly well known. But they were terms applied to a *commanded* offering—an offering, which, the law taught them, derived its sanction from God, not from man. Had they not received it with the most unquestionable demonstrations of its Divine authority? Does not the book of Leviticus open with the explicit and emphatic declaration, that “*the Lord called unto Moses and spake unto him out of the Tabernacle of the congregation, saying, speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any of you bring an offering,*” &c. And does not God himself say “*I have GIVEN you the blood †.*” (Lev. xvii. 11.) Not a syllable respecting his having *adopted* the rite, or man’s having invented it.

When the children of Israel, therefore, read the account of Abel’s coming to offer the *firstlings* of his flock, and of the fat thereof, and the recorded *acceptance* of his offering; could they entertain even a *suspicion*, that the very rite, which was enforced upon them with such solemn declarations of the Divine

\* Lev. iii. 17. Deut. xii. 6.

† I decline entering upon the controversy respecting the sense of *ANER* in Gen. iv. 7. because, from my very slight acquaintance with Hebrew, of which I am now only a learner, I cannot pretend to arbitrate the merits of the respective arguments. The reader will find some criticisms on Mr. Davison’s reasonings in the Quarterly Theological Review for September, 1825, to which I refer him. One part of Mr. Davison’s work connected with this point, I cannot pass without observing the excessive and indiscriminating severity with which he has condemned Lightfoot. That this author’s views were not sometimes erroneous cannot be affirmed. But this by no means justifies Mr. Davison (p. 70) in declaring, that “he is *one of the last* writers to deserve our confidence, either for his perspicuity as a scholar, or his justness of thinking as a divine.”

† It may be urged here that *given* or *decreed* in this passage may refer to its immediate sanction. This amounts at the utmost to a possibility. But this possibility I shall presently attempt to destroy, when I show the true bearing of this memorable passage upon the question of the expiatory import of the primitive sacrifices.

sanction, was offered by Abel as a mere human invention?

Again. Could the Israelites, who had beheld every thing, however minute, connected with their ceremonial code distinctly stamped with the Divine sanction, and the absolute creation of Divine command; could they suppose, that *Sacrifice*, the *principal* feature of their worship, the very ordinance to which all other parts of the ritual were *entirely subservient*, was a mere human invention? Could they conjecture, that God, who had planned and ordered the tapestry, and the very loops of the tabernacle, should have been directed by man to the atoning Sacrifice, which was to *cover* our sinfulness—that He, who appointed the vail of separation, should borrow from his creatures, the *blood* that was to be sprinkled before the mercy seat? Or could they imagine, that He, who ordained the very vestments of the priests, the form and the materials of the altar, should have left human reason, the reason of a corrupt, fallen, and erring creature, to discover the victim, for which the altar was to be built, and with which the priest was to approach it? Surely not! Every association of a Jewish mind, nay the very evidence of his outward senses, must have led him to consider *all* his ceremonial as of Divine appointment, and Sacrifice the *crown* of all, the most *solemn*, the most *important* of Divine institutions.

But we may advance still farther. The Jews, to whom this history was addressed, were taught that they were, neither to *add* nor to *diminish aught* from God's commands; (Deut. iv. 2.) and the manner, in which the Divine indignation was roused by any attempt to proceed in God's worship otherwise than he had commanded, was abundantly manifested in the cases of Nadab and Abihu, and of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. With such *doctrines*, and such *examples* \* before their eyes could they infer, that

\* Whether the apostle (Coloss. ii.) does or does not condemn will-



Abel brought his offering, and that offering was *accepted*, without a Divine authority for it? Could they conjecture, nay could they believe this, unless Moses had expressly and positively declared it?

I conclude, then, that the natural and strong presumption of those, to whom the narrative contained in the book of Genesis was addressed, must have been in favour of the Divine institution of Sacrifice, and that the historian must have been fully aware of this presumption, and would have *undeceived* them **HAD IT BEEN ERRONEOUS.**

Was there then any thing in his narrative which demanded any special notice of the Divine institution of Sacrifice? This is our next question.

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## CHAPTER VII.

III. *Is there any thing in the nature and scope of the history of the primitive times, which should call for an express declaration of the origin of Sacrifice; if it were instituted by God?*

A PARADOXICAL, I may almost say sceptical, tone seems to characterize the reasoning, which, (upon

worship, I shall not examine here. Neither shall I enter upon Mr. Davison's arguments and statements respecting that subject. I am not contending that the human origin of sacrifice would *necessarily* render it unacceptable to the Deity. All I claim, and I think it cannot be denied, is, that the offering of sacrifice of *human invention* must have appeared *highly criminal* IN THE EYES OF THE ISRAELITES; and that an *ACCEPTED* sacrifice could be of that description, is what they would neither *contemplate*, nor *believe*, unless *DISTINCTLY INFORMED UPON INDISPUTABLE AUTHORITY*. But the offering of any rite of human invention as having a *sacramental* efficacy, must be criminal in the eye of God.

the ground that Moses *might* \*, in a few words, have set at rest the point; by declaring the origin of Sacrifice in the Book of Genesis) denies the doctrine of the Divine institution of it; though supported by the general sentiments of mankind, by the universality of its adoption, by the character, and proceedings of God, by the solemnity of its sanctions, and importance of its office under the Law; and finally by its typical relation to the principal circumstance of the *pre-ordained* scheme of Redemption. The indications of its being notoriously of Divine origin pervade almost every portion of the Law, in which it is mentioned, and I have thence endeavoured to

\* "We wanted (says Mr. Benson, *Huls. Lect.* 1822, p. 192) *no formal history of the rite*, no formal account of it *explaining how or when it was instituted*, (the words in Italics are Magee's quoted by Benson) by God. We wanted merely an assurance of the fact that God had commanded the practice of animal sacrifice," &c.

I am surprised that the acute mind of Mr. Benson did not perceive, that this argument, if it had any weight against the Divine, must press with *tenfold* power against the *human* institution. Moses addressed his history immediately to the Jews, and could not be solicitous to satisfy the almost sceptical fastidiousness of modern times. *If a Jew*, then, had discovered the *human* origin of Sacrifice, he might urge against Moses the very argument of Mr. Benson. He might say, 'You have imposed upon us a human institution as a divine one. *We wanted no formal account of the origin of Sacrifice*; one word introduced into your narrative of Abel's sacrifice, would have prevented us from falling into an error, to which you must perceive all our prepossessions and information inevitably tended to lead us. You shew the *importance* of sacrifice in God's sight by mentioning his solemn *acceptance* of Abel's; you represent it as the *venerated* and *uniform* observance of our forefathers; you teach us that they were in the habit of receiving *revelations of his will* on *less important matters*; you know the *universal* notion respecting sacrifice; you will not deliver the *minutest* part of the ritual *connected* with it without, at the same time, asserting *its Divine authority*; you exhibit to us most appalling examples of wrath against those, who presume to offer *uncommanded* rites; what must we conclude from all this, but the *Divine* origin of Sacrifice; how could we entertain the *remotest suspicion* of its *human* origin? If it were of Divine origin, there could be no occasion to mention so *obvious* a fact. But if it were *human*, the omission of this circumstance has the effect of deception.'

shew, that the prepossessions of the people, to whom the narrative of Abel's, and of other sacrifices antecedent to the Law was addressed, could require no mention of their origin, *unless that origin were human*. Neither did the *scope* of the narrative require any such declaration. The Pentateuch consists principally of a succinct history of mankind, but particularly of the forefathers of the Israelites; a larger detail of the circumstances of their Exodus; and a minute declaration of those laws, which were to form their civil and religious code. The first part of the Pentateuch, which we call the book of Genesis, is neither professedly, nor substantially, a record of the origin, or of the intent of Sacrifice, but of *historical facts*. Some of the chief objects, to set forth which this record appears to have been intended, were the causes of man's liability to death; that the fathers received certain promises; that they manifested their faith in the true God by sacrificing to him amidst the prevalent apostasy; and that certain of these promises were to be fulfilled in the time at which Moses lived. This history was addressed not merely to those, who lived at the time of the *giving* of the law, and whose prepossessions would, as we have observed, strongly tend to the conclusion of its divine institution; but it was addressed also to their *posterity*, to men who, being *born and educated* under that law, which so awfully prohibited human inventions in the Tabernacle worship, would in a still greater degree entertain the same prepossessions. If then Sacrifice were a *human* invention, it would apparently amount to positive deception on the part of Moses, to *conceal* it. But if it were of *divine* appointment, then we have just the species of evidence, which the general *scope* of the historian *would teach us to expect*. We have notice of its solemn *acceptance*,—we have notice of the *uniformity* of patriarchal observance,—we have notice of the *reverence*, in which this rite was held,—we



have notice, that God frequently communicated his will to the patriarchs in matters, apparently much more within the province of human reason, than the discovery of Sacrifice; and finally, we have notice, that he *commanded and regulated* Sacrifice on special occasions.

This is precisely such notice, as we might fairly expect to find in this part of the work, when there is another portion of it expressly devoted to treat of Sacrifice and its sanctions,—a portion from which *alone* succeeding generations, and from which, together with the universal veneration and practice of it previously to the law, the contemporaries of Moses would respectively derive their notions of its origin and authority.

To come to particulars, let us examine one or two cases, with a view to ascertain how, and for what purpose the mention of Sacrifice appears to be introduced.

In the grand case of Abel's Sacrifice, (Gen. iv.) the whole tenor of the narrative indicates that Moses did not especially design here to record the first Sacrifice, or to draw any particular attention to that rite. Sacrifice is brought forward quite *incidentally* as a usual practice; no *prominence* is given to it, as though it were the first example of its being practised; its mention is altogether *subordinate* to the principal feature of the transaction, viz. the *first murder, and Cain's forfeiture of his right of primogeniture*. These two latter circumstances constitute the *main* subject of this part of the history; and this subject in nowise led to any allusion to the *origin* of Sacrifice. In his narration Moses touches, in due order, upon the events, which led to the terrible catastrophe, and relates that, either in *process of time*, or at the *appointed time*\*, the two brothers

\* It is not *material* to the argument which of these two senses be adopted. The latter strengthens it, and is espoused by Kennicott

came together to make their offerings to God; and that Cain was so exasperated at the *acceptance* of his brother's offering, and the rejection of his own, that he slew him. The *notoriety* of the origin, and nature of Sacrifice among those to whom the narrative was addressed, satisfactorily accounts for the omission of any allusion to that origin, where the *first murder* was the principal subject, and Sacrifice was mentioned only *incidentally*\*. This throws the question back to the ground on which I have discussed it; namely, the previous opinion, which the Jews from the law, and other sources, would naturally entertain respecting Sacrifice.

The same may be observed of all those cases wherein Moses directly, or indirectly, refers to this rite,—as when he speaks occasionally of “building an altar.” The purpose, for which the altar is built, he considers as notorious. He states facts, from time to time, as denoting to the Jews, that their forefathers were not unmindful or deficient in reverence of this solemn rite; and the manner in which he sometimes mentions, and sometimes omits the circumstance of building an altar, marks that the preparation for Sacrifice was as much a matter of course, as pitching their tent. Where Sacrifice itself forms a *prominent* feature in the narrative, it is always from its being offered, or *commanded* upon some *great occasion*, which could have no other effect upon the mind of the Israelites, than to impress them with a sense of its *paramount sanctity* and im-

and Magee. (Vide Magee on Atonement, No. lvii.) The very *incidental* manner in which the mention of Sacrifice is introduced, appears to decisively indicate that it was not then a new practice.

\* Moses, when relating to the *Israelites* the *effects* of the acceptance of Abel's offering in *exciting Cain's wrath*, could have no more occasion to mention or refer to the *divine origin* of Sacrifice, than an historian, describing to *Englishmen* the *effects* of the *statute* for the relief of the Catholics, in *exciting the fanaticism* of Lord George Gordon, could have to mention, that an act of Parliament must have the sanction of the King, Lords, and Commons.



portance; and would invest it with a character consistent with any thing, rather than *human* invention. Every thing presented to the Jews conspired to stamp it with divine authority, and Moses therefore omits the mention of its Divine institution; because it *was notorious*, and because the *scope* of his history did not demand that it should be specified.

But we must not yet quit this ground. Mr. Davison brings forth a knot tied by the paradoxical ingenuity of Warburton, and declares his opinion that it cannot be unbound. The substance of the argument in this case is, that Moses has distinctly mentioned the divine sanctification of the Sabbath, but not the divine appointment of Sacrifice: and hence it is inferred, that Sacrifice was not of Divine appointment. To this, after the evidence offered to establish the Divine origin of Sacrifice, it might be sufficient to answer "*non sequitur*." And the academic freshness of Mr. Davison's logic will at once satisfy him, that the conclusion is by no means supported by the premises. But my object is not to dispute, but to examine. I have some arguments to produce, and some remarks to make respecting Mr. Davison's strictures upon Dr. Magee. Let Mr. Davison speak in his own words.

"This express mention," he says, "of the *Sabbath*, joined with the *omission* respecting *sacrifice*, has been urged by Bishop Warburton with great force. He holds it as almost decisive in itself, against the divine appointment of Sacrifice. In some of the most important views of the principal question, I shall have to express my dissent from that distinguished writer. But in this one article, his reasoning is most just. The direct, the obvious impression, from the dissimilar state of the Scripture evidence reflected upon the two institutions, is to create a belief in their different origin. God's own blessing and sanctification, from the beginning, adhere to the first, that of the Sabbath. His blessing indeed, but



not his precedent sanctification, to the other, that of sacrifice. This argument, however, has lately been discussed again, and rejected, in a work of our own times; a work which has acquired a just celebrity by the merits of its various erudition, and by its tone of acute and forcible discussion: 'The Discourses and Dissertations on the Scriptural doctrines of Atonement and Sacrifice,' by a Prelate of the Irish church, Archbishop Magee. This very able writer, of whom I can speak only with a great respect, and with the deference due to his learning and his high station, maintains the Divine origin of Sacrifice, which he makes it a leading object of his work to establish, and treats any deviation from that opinion with a very frank severity. He has suggested some solutions intended to account for the *omission*, which is now in question, and deny the adverse inference from it. In all which solutions, I cannot but think that the denial is ineffectually made; and, in one instance, I could almost say that I desiderate something in the candour and perfect fairness of the learned author towards his subject. For he would *diminish* and depress the comparative evidence for the first divine institution of the Sabbath, by urging the *incidental* and *indirect* mode in which it is referred to, without a positive *command* for its observance expressed. To which plea I think the reply must be, that if the indirect reference to the Sabbathical institution does not sufficiently prove, or imply, a command for its observance, the no-reference to the institution of sacrifice, will render a command for its observance far from credible\*."

In this passage there are two points to be examined, the one Warburton's inference above alluded to, and the other Mr. Davison's strictures upon the reasoning of the Archbishop of Dublin.

Several answers to Warburton's reasonings are

\* Davison on Sacrifice, p. 11, 12, 13.

collected and urged by Dr. Magee \*, to which it is sufficient to refer the reader. Instead of repeating them, I shall urge one connected with the line of argument, which I have hitherto adopted, I shall look to the *scope* of the historian in *mentioning* the sanctification of the Sabbath. Warburton, book ix. ch. ii. says, "To impress the highest reverence on the *Sabbath*, the sacred historian is careful to record its divine original." That Moses did record the divine original of the Sabbath, *to impress on it "the highest reverence and importance"* is very true—but it is *not* true that he did so *here*, in the *book of Genesis*—It was recorded for *that purpose* in the *twentieth chapter of Exodus*; but in the first chapter of Genesis it is recorded as a merely important *fact*; necessarily falling in with the *course* † of the narrative, in the strict order of time. The history of the first *week* of the creation is the subject; the operations of the six days, the rest, and the blessing of the seventh are *successively*, and plainly narrated. It was *not* from this *narrative*, that the Jews derived their *command* to *keep* the Sabbath; neither, though the cessation of God from creation was a reason for observing the Sabbath, is it here related *merely* as a reason. The rest, and the sanctification, are mentioned as *facts*, which close the history of the week. But both

\* Magee on Atonement, No. lviii.

† Benson says "He" (Moses) "has almost interrupted the progress of his narrative for its introduction, or, if this be too much to assume, we must, at least, allow it is incidentally and parenthetically made." *Huls. Lect.* 1822, p. 193.

I have attentively perused this part of the narrative, and can truly profess, that I perceive nothing like *interruption* of the narrative to introduce the account of the Sabbath. Instead of its being parenthetical, the whole account, from the beginning of the first chapter to the end of the third verse of the second of Genesis, seems to be one simple, clear, and coherent relation of the *successive* events of one entire week. The work of each of the six days is progressively described, and the whole naturally closed with the statement of God's resting on, and sanctifying the seventh.



had been *declared* to them probably *before* the book of Genesis was written, and unquestionably before it was published as a national document. The sanctification, then, of the Sabbath was *mentioned* simply because the *scope*, and order of the narrative *required* it, *not* for the *purpose* of conveying to the Jews any *additional* sanction, beyond that, with which they were *already* acquainted ; and the mention of the divine origin of Sacrifice was *omitted*, because the *scope* of the narrative did *not* require it, and the Israelites were already satisfied of it from the *same* source, from which they derived their knowledge of the other, namely, from the *Law*.

But Mr. Davison has not contented himself with stating, that Archbishop Magee has failed in his attempts to answer Warburton's arguments ; he moreover insinuates the charge of want of candour and fairness.

"In one instance," he says, "I could desiderate something in the *candour*, and *perfect fairness* of the learned author towards his subject. For he would *diminish*, and depress the comparative evidence for the first Divine institution of the Sabbath, by urging the *incidental* and *indirect* mode in which it is referred to, without a positive *command* for its observance expressed."

Far from me be the presumption of pretending to fling the shield of my opinion over the character of that learned prelate. But I will not pass over this part of the subject without offering some remarks, upon a charge which I cannot but characterize as rash, and inconsiderate.

The archbishop fairly admits that "no doubt can be reasonably entertained of the import of this passage as relating to the institution of the Sabbath, yet still the rapidity of the historian has left this rather as a matter of inference ; and it is certain that he has no where made *express* mention of the observance of a Sabbath until the time of Moses." Is he not fully borne out in this observation, espe-



cially when the patriarchal observance of the Sabbath has been actually, and strenuously disputed? Nay, far from having been wanting in candour, he has not pushed the argument to its full extent. I deny that the *observance* of the Sabbath could be inferred, as Mr. Davison has stated from its "institution\*" in the *passage* in question. Before we could understand what was *meant* by sanctifying, and blessing the Sabbath, as mentioned in the second chapter of Genesis, we must "look at it through the Law." We must ascertain in what sense the people, to whom the history was addressed, would interpret it. And to do this we must recur to the twentieth chapter of Exodus. The real fact is, that the account in question does *not* give the Divine *command* for the *observance* of the Sabbath, but simply narrates the historical fact, which, in the law, Moses *states* as the *reason* of the *command*. That a command for its observance is implied in its sanctification there can be no doubt; but that *certainty* is

\* God's *sanctifying* and *blessing* the day, as simply stated in this passage, and not followed by a hint of human observance till the Exodus, would not *necessarily* imply, that he intended it to be marked by any particular acts of religious worship, or by a total rest from worldly employments. It might mean, for instance, simply that it should be a day in which he would be propitious, and bless all things done on that day. This, I say, might be urged in reasoning on the *bare statement* in Genesis, coupled with the want of *recorded observance*. But the moment we look at it through the proper medium, the sense becomes at once clear; the Israelites, who had *heard the declarations of the Law*, would not hesitate as to the real meaning, nor entertain a doubt of its observance.

For my own part, so far from doubting this, it appears to me the most frivolous paradox to dispute the observance of the Sabbath, because it is *not* mentioned in the Book of Genesis. I have already expressed my sentiments in differing with Mede, (see my Sermon on the Passover) respecting his notion, that the Jews did not observe the Sabbath in their Exodus till the occasion mentioned Exodus xvi. The very familiarity, with which in that chapter Moses speaks of the Sabbath, shews at once the reason of its observance not being recorded, namely, its *notoriety*, and its not coming within the *scope* of the history.

attained not from the passage itself, nor from any record of its observance, but from the *commandment in Exodus*, and the sense in which we perceive, that an Israelite, who had heard that command, must naturally understand the phrase, *sanctify the Sabbath*.

With respect to Mr. D.'s argument upon the "no reference to the institution of Sacrifice," it may be answered, that the Sabbath, and Sacrifice, both stand upon the same footing. Neither the *observance* of the one, nor the *institution* of the other could be proved, nor were intended to be proved, from the passages, in which their first mention occurs. We must look at them both "*through the Law*." We must see in what light the respective passages would appear to those, to whom they were addressed. And we shall *then* perceive, that an Israelite could no more doubt that an *accepted* Sacrifice was divinely instituted, than that a sanctified Sabbath was commanded to be humanly observed. Moses speaks of them both as familiarly known to the Jews, and it is the notoriety \* of the facts, and their not coming within the scope of his narrative, which causes him to omit the mention of both the observance of the Sabbath, and the Divine institution of Sacrifice. The above is the only mode in which they can respectively be deduced; and the very conviction, which Mr. D. expresses of the *certainty* of the primeval *observance* of the Sabbath, confirms me in the opinion, that I have, upon just grounds, maintained the Divine origin of Sacrifice; in fact, upon the only rational grounds on which I can conjecture, that he must have arrived at his conviction respecting the primeval *observance* of the Sabbath. When, therefore, Archbishop Magee says, that the patriarchal observance may be *inferred* from Gen. ii. 2, 3, he is far from being deficient in "candour and fairness," he allows the passage *all* the weight that can be claimed for it.

\* Magee on Atonement, Vol. II. p. 37.



## CHAPTER VIII.

*Proofs that Sacrificial Atonement was not peculiar to the Mosaic Law, but the charter of the Primeval, and Patriarchal Dispensations.*

I. THE reasoning we have used, to shew that Moses must have understood the Divine institution of Sacrifice as notorious and unquestioned; and that he could have no inducement to mention the origin, but upon the supposition of its being of human invention, will generally bear with almost equal force upon the question, whether the Sacrifices of the Patriarchs, and antediluvians were *expiatory*.

That they were so may be inferred from the prominent, I may almost say, single, distinction, with which they are noticed in the history of the world previously to the Exodus. Though the Israelites could not suppose, that Sacrifice was originally applicable to all those purposes of legal atonement, and purification, which arose out of the *peculiarities* of their new ritual; yet they would naturally conclude, that Sacrifice always possessed the same *principal* and *general* character before, as under the law; namely: that it was *an appointed means of reconciling man to God*. This, I contend, would be their conclusion, unless they received some information to the contrary.

Atonement is spoken of in the Mosaic law as the *known* purport of Sacrifice, not as a novel doctrine. No explanation is offered, as though the nature of expiatory Sacrifice had been hitherto undiscovered. But Moses (see, for example, Lev. i.) proceeds abruptly to inform them, *not* that Sacrifices are *expiatory rites*, but *how* and *by whom* expiatory Sacri-



fices are to be offered under the law. All this denotes the notoriety of the expiatory character of Sacrifice, and I shall not dwell upon arguments which, in proving the Divine institution of Sacrifice, have been sufficiently urged.

I shall proceed to the direct evidence, and shall begin with the palladium of Mr. Davison's cause, Levit. xvii. 11. It may seem almost paradoxical to say, that I begin with this very passage, because I consider it as containing the most clear, and decisive proof, that expiatory Sacrifice was the charter of the primeval dispensation, and as establishing a fact, which alone overthrows the whole of Mr. Davison's theory. He gives us the passage in italics, and claims it as his strong hold; I claim it as mine. The reader will decide.

"Turn," says he, "to the Mosaic law. See what a different scene of things instantly meets our view; and how prominent the difference. *For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you, upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls. For it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul* \*." "This is the doctrine of the Mosaic Sacrifice; and the whole body of the Mosaic law is sprinkled with the atoning power of blood. But this, I say, is a new doctrine; a doctrine of which we find no positive information, nor any possible vestige in the primeval religion. And though the transference has been very confidently made, it is most evident, that we have no right to transfer this doctrine of the subsequent law to the elder history †."

"This is a *new* doctrine," "a doctrine" of which we find not even "any *probable* vestige." "It is *most evident* that we have no right to transfer the doctrine of the subsequent law to the elder history." These

\* Lev. xvii. 11.

† Davison on Sacrifice, p. 31, 32.

are large assumptions, and as Mr. Davison speaks of the "*confidence*, with which the transference has been made," I should have expected from him some *proofs* of the novelty of this doctrine.

He will perhaps stand upon the ground, that he is not to prove a virtually negative proposition, that it is incumbent on those, who affirm the previous establishment of expiatory Sacrifice, to bring forward their evidences. This may be fair ground for a *disputant* to take, but he presents himself to us as an *inquirer*. He should, I think, then have pointed out to us some expressions in this passage, some points in the manner of its introduction, some peculiarities in those, to whom it was addressed, which characterise it as a *new* doctrine. For I must frankly state, that I see nothing in this passage like the introduction of a *new* doctrine; and I shall endeavour to satisfy others, that so far from being such, it is a most *pregnant and decisive proof* that Sacrifice was ordained by God from the *beginning* as an expiatory rite.

That it was not a *new* doctrine may be gathered from the following considerations,

1. In the book of Leviticus, atonement by blood had been spoken of *familiarly*, and as *perfectly well* known, from the very first chapter, and long before this passage becomes the subject.

2. I contend, that this identical reason for abstinence from blood had been orally declared to them, *before* the publication of the Book of Genesis, with its account of primitive Sacrifice; and thus so directly asserts both the Divine origin and expiatory character of Sacrifice, that they must necessarily be presumed, unless Moses had decidedly *excepted* the primitive Sacrifices from the range of this general declaration.

3. Not a *hint* is there in this passage of a *CHANGE* in the import of Sacrifice; not a syllable of *adopting* a human rite, or of *exalting* a mere eucharistic offering to the character of expiatory, and vicarious



Sacrifice. Neither the *expressions* nor the *manner* of its introduction give the slightest countenance to the idea of the novelty of its doctrine. As to the expressions, God says, "I have GIVEN." *When* did he give? *Why* should it be *assumed*, that he gave it under the Law, and not from the beginning? Why should he say "I have GIVEN" if he had merely *adopted* it? Again, as to the *manner* of its introduction: how is it introduced? as *new* information respecting the character and authority of Sacrifice? No; merely as a REASON for *abstinence from blood*. Is this like the introduction of a *new* doctrine on the important subject of expiatory Sacrifice? Let the reader see the passage, and its context. Let the plainest man say, whether Mr. Davison be warranted in assuming from it that expiation by blood was a *new* doctrine?

"And thou shalt say unto them, whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers, that sojourn among you, that *eateth any manner of blood, I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and I will cut him off from among his people. FOR the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make atonement for your souls: FOR it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.* THEREFORE I said unto the children of Israel, no soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood\*."

Can any thing be more obvious, than the fact, that the expiatory character of Sacrifice, instead of being *here* established, and announced as a *new* doctrine, is mentioned as a *subordinate* circumstance, as a REASON, for that *prohibition*, which forms the *immediate* and *principal* subject. The Israelites are *here* taught, *not* that God has given them the blood to make atonement, but that they are *not* to

\* Lev. xvii. 10, 11, 12.



*eat blood*; and, as an impressive REASON, they are reminded that God had GIVEN them the blood, to make atonement for their souls.

But this is not all. I have yet another argument to offer upon this remarkable passage, which, though overlooked by Mr. Davison, is, in my opinion, one of the most conclusive, which can be brought to demonstrate the expiatory character of Sacrifice from the beginning.

I have just shewn, that in this passage, God declares his having given the blood for the purpose of atonement, as the REASON, for which they are *prohibited* from *eating* blood. But turn to the book of Genesis \*, there we find the very *same prohibition* delivered, but *without any specified reason*. Could any Israelite, then, who *had heard the law delivered*, and this prohibition enforced by the *affecting and awful consideration*, that God had consecrated blood, and separated it from common use, by *having given it upon the altar to make atonement for the soul*; could any Israelite, who *had heard this*; afterwards read the *self-same prohibition*, accompanying the FIRST RECORDED † PERMISSION to *use animal-food*; and yet entertain a shadow of doubt, whether the *same REASON* were the cause of the *same prohibition*; a prohibition given to the ancestors of the *same chosen people*; announced to men practising the *same Sacrificial rite*, recorded in a part of the *same history*; and, finally, proceeding from the *same eternal, consistent, and unchangeable God*? Could there, I say, be a shadow of doubt in the mind of any Israelite, under these circumstances? He must naturally suppose *some reason* for the prohibition of

\* "But the flesh, with the blood, which is the life thereof, shall ye not eat."—Gen. ix. 4.

† I say *recorded*, not that I entertain any doubt whether this were *actually* the first permission to use animal-food, but merely not to assume more than the very letter of Gen. ix. strictly warrants.—*Vide Magee on Atonement*, No. lii.

blood in the case of Noah; but what could suggest to him any *other* reason than *that*, which he had *heard* from that oral revelation, from which alone he could, or ought to derive the *reason* of God's proceedings. I contend that this, as well as the other cases, clearly vindicates the general principle,—that, in the book of Genesis, historical facts are rapidly sketched, and many things of the greatest importance are passed over in silence, on account of their *notoriety*, and their mention being foreign to the general *scope* of the historian. The omission of the REASON for prohibiting Noah from eating blood,—the want of a specific command, or even record respecting the *observance* of the Sabbath,—the “*no-reference*” (as Mr. Davison terms it) to the *origin* of Sacrifice; all mark the *same general* impression on the mind of Moses, that he was addressing his book to men, who *had received the law*, to whom all these three great subjects were familiar, and who, therefore, could not require that he should specially mention them in that part of the Pentateuch, which was not professedly devoted to these subjects, and naturally led him to refer to them only *incidentally*.

The “Scripture records” are not here (to use Mr. Davison's words) “*solicited* to lend their aid to the purpose.” Every rule of just interpretation leads us to the above conclusion. The plain sense of these two parallel passages must be violently distorted, by assuming, that Moses did not intend the Israelites to understand, that the *prohibition*, in both cases, was founded on *one*, and the *same* reason, viz. God had GIVEN THE BLOOD UPON THE ALTAR TO MAKE ATONEMENT.

Moses, in his cursory narrative of events, naturally mentions the *prohibition to eat blood*, together with the *permission to eat animal-food*. He incidentally shews the uniformity of the Divine counsels, with respect to expiatory Sacrifice; he marks the *conse-*



eration of blood in consequence of its import in that rite. That the *reason* of the prohibition should be *specified* was quite unnecessary, as it must be notorious to men, whose almost every day associations set forth to them the sacred and solemn uses to which blood was applied. Moses could scarcely have penned these two passages, containing the same prohibition, recorded for the instruction of the same people, and yet have expected that they would suppose God to have founded the prohibition in one case on reasons, dissimilar to that, which was *declared* to be the ground of it in the other.

If this reasoning be correct, Mr. Davison must abandon his whole theory, both respecting the date of the institution of expiatory Sacrifice, and respecting its human origin. For he himself says, "The human rite was neither a real, nor a symbolical atonement. For to invent a type, or an adequate symbol, implies a knowledge of the reality. This knowledge man could never attain to by his own means. How could he soar to Heaven in his ideas, to foresee the Sacrifice of the Son of God \*."

\* Davison on Sac. 142.

Mr. Davison claims the sanction of Outram to the position that "there is neither example nor evidence in Scripture before the Mosaic Law, of expiatory Sacrifice." p. 83. Whatever may be the weight of Outram's authority, let it be fairly exhibited. The passage quoted by Mr. Davison being graced with sundry *italics* not to be found in the original, I beg to submit it to the reader according to the author's own typography, which by laying the *emphasis* on a particular word, seems to produce a sense not so accordant with Mr. Davison's position, as the italics in his quotation appear to display.

"Jam vero sacra piacularia, qualia a *Mose* descripta sunt, usquamne fortè in usu fuerint, ante legem sacram Hebræis datam, ego minime definierim!"

Now Outram treats of *two kinds* of piacular Sacrifice, חטאת and עשה of which each had its distinctive peculiarities. That Outram, then, declined giving a decided opinion, whether before the law there were any piacular Sacrifices as *described by Moses*, is a very different proposition from his affirming that there are *no* piacular Sacrifices at all.



I shall now advert to three cases of Sacrifice, in which, though prior to the law, some *indications* of its expiatory character may be traced. And this is full as much as we can expect. For, as I have already contended, it is only under the revelations of the Mosaic Law, that we look for a specific declaration of the nature of Sacrifice; inasmuch as that is the portion of the Mosaic history, which professes to give an account of it; and as Sacrifice was not a new rite introduced then for the first time, or upon new principles; but an *extension* of the original typical means of atonement, to the various peculiarities of the Levitical code.

Abel's Sacrifice I shall at present pass over; because whatever vestiges of its atoning nature are to be discovered, must be inferred by comparing it with the places in which it is mentioned in the New Testament, (see chap. xv.)

I. We find this passage in Job i. 5. Job "offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, it may be that my sons have *sinned*, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually."

Here not only is the connection between Sacrifice, and *forgiveness of sin*, clearly distinguished; but also the frequency of Sacrifice is stated. Now, whatever may be said of heathen notions of Sacrifice, it cannot, I think, be fairly maintained, in this case, that Job's offering can be interpreted as having any other connection with forgiveness of sin, than that which arises from its being an expiatory rite. This inference is fairly deducible from the letter of the narrative, and receives the strongest confirmation from the sanctity of Job, and from the great and principal feature of God's pre-ordained scheme of salvation, that atonement must be made for transgressions.

It may be urged, that in placing the age of Job

higher than that of Moses, I am assuming too much\*. But this question has been largely discussed, and I refer the reader to Numbers XXIII. and LIX. (particularly the latter) in Magee's work upon the Atonement, where the opinions respecting the character, date, and author of the book of Job are ably examined, and where may be found abundant references to various authorities on the same subjects.

II. Of the Sacrifice offered by Noah † (Gen. viii. 24) the result is thus described.

"And the Lord *smelled a sweet savour*: and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground *for man's sake*, for (because י) *the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth*."

The circumstances which tend to characterize this as a case of expiatory Sacrifice, are these: that the phrase the Lord "smelled a sweet savour" clearly denotes God's *acceptance*; that "sweet savour" is in a multitude of instances under the law applied to piacular offerings; that it is expressly used in describing our Saviour as a Sacrifice for sin ‡, and that the declared effect of God's acceptance is the solemn promise, that he will no more curse the ground, on account of *the evil imaginations of man's heart*. This promise is subsequent to, and obviously connected with the acceptance § of Sacrifice. But Sacrifice in

\* Townsend, in his Arrangement of the Bible, fixes the period of Job's trial as previous to that of Abraham. He adopts this date partly upon the authority of Hales, and partly upon certain views, which he himself takes of the Divine counsels.

† See Spenser, *De Leg. Hebr.* 763.

‡ Ephes. v. 2. See *Whitby's Commentary*.

§ διανοθεῖς οὐ προσθησω, &c. say the Seventy. Mr. Benson too, in endeavouring to account for the universality of Sacrifice from Noah's, observes, "The blessing and the sacrifice which CALLED down the blessing would naturally be fixed in their own thoughts and communicated," &c. &c. *Huls. Lect.* p. 214, 1822.

This appears to me sufficiently strongly expressed. That a Sacrifice which was a mere human invention, neither *expiatory* nor *typical*, should call down the blessing upon the human race, will, I am sure, stagger many who have hitherto believed, that man has



the sight of God (as far as we are informed) can have no other connection with the pardoning of human wickedness, than that which it derives from his appointment as an expiatory rite, typical of *that atonement*, by which the serpent's head is bruised, and man restored to the favour of his God.

The celebrated case of Abraham's trial, related in the twenty-second chapter of Genesis, presents to my mind a most striking evidence of both the *typical, and expiatory* nature of Sacrifice. Mr. Davison has not overlooked the argument *usually* built upon the case, and has made, I think, an ineffectual attempt to meet it upon the ground, "that there was no *expiation* or *atonement* joined with this emblematical oblation;" that there was a *special command* \* to Abraham to offer up his son, and that this would not stamp on *other* Sacrifices the character of either typical, or expiatory offerings. But the position, which I am about to take, presents no opening to such objections; I shall exhibit this case in a light in which it has not been hitherto viewed; and, in so doing, shall have to differ not only from Mr. Davison, but, as far as I can find, from every preceding expositor. I affirm, then, that

neither righteousness of his own, nor *gifts* wherewith he can purchase God's favour, and have read St. Paul's declaration, that without blood there is no remission.

\* "The *commanded sacrifice* of Isaac, 'the beloved son' of Abraham, is the second incident. This is justly to be considered as a type of the Sacrifice, as his restoration is of the Resurrection of Christ. But no *Expiation* or *Atonement* is joined with this emblematic Oblation. Consequently it was a symbol only of the *act*, not of the *Power* and *Virtue* of the *Christian Sacrifice*. But of all the Prophetic types, this one, in the commanded Sacrifice of Isaac, appears to be among the most significant. It stands at the head of the dispensation of Revealed Religion, as reduced into covenant with the people of God in the person of their Founder and Progenitor. Being thus displayed, as it is, in the history of the *Father of the Faithful*, it seems to be wrought into the foundations of Faith. In the surrender to sacrifice of a beloved son, the Patriarchal Church begins with an adumbration of the Christian reality."—*Davison on Sacrifice*, p. 170.



the received opinion, *that ISAAC, in this transaction, was a TYPE OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICE is erroneous*; that neither the circumstances of the narrative, nor the allusion to it by St. Paul, warrant any such inference; and that by a departure from the simple outlines traced in Scripture, much of the force and beauty of this most significant type has been overlooked, or has been obscured, by various unauthorised conceits. The real type of *Christ*, on this, as well as on other important occasions, WAS THE RAM OR MALE LAMB caught in the thicket, and *provided* by God. *Isaac* was the type of the FAITHFUL CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM.

As this notion is opposed to high, I may say universal, authority\*, it behoves me to shew some grounds, on which I thus differ from all preceding interpretation.

I. I am not acquainted with any passage of Scripture, in which it is intimated, that Isaac was, on this occasion, a type of Christ's SACRIFICE. Much, I know, has been said respecting his *bearing the wood*, and thus representing Christ bearing the cross. But for this, and various other particulars, nothing like authority† has been exhibited.

II. It can be, I think, satisfactorily shewn both from the whole tenor of the transaction, and also

\* Dr. Graves in his Lectures on the Pentateuch, vol. ii. p. 379, adopts Warburton's account of this typical transaction, and adduces it as a proof of the doctrine of the Resurrection being known to Abraham and Isaac. But the view I take of the subject, though differing from his, will not affect the force of his argument.

† That Isaac was in *many* respects a type of Christ, and that even in *this* case he *might* be such, I do not mean to dispute. There are points, and very strong points of resemblance, such as Isaac being *figuratively* as Christ was *really*, the FIRST FRUITS of our resurrection. But then, these, if at all intended in *this* case, are *secondary* points of typical resemblance; they are not, I maintain, in the PRINCIPAL import of this singular adumbration of future events. If we suppose that the type had a *twofold* signification, then Isaac *may* be said to be a type of Christ. But the plain and *primary* import of the type is, in my judgment, that, which I am endeavouring to illustrate and establish.

from the allusion to it by the Apostle (Heb. xi. 19), that *Isaac* was, *then*, the representative *not* of *Christ*, but of ALL THE CHILDREN of the Promise, ALL WHO SHOULD BE TRUE CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM, WHETHER IN CIRCUMCISION, OR IN UNCIRCUMCISION. (Rom. iv. 8.) *Isaac's* figurative resurrection, instead of being *primarily intended* as a type of Christ's resurrection, was a type of HIS OWN AND THEIR resurrection *through faith in the atoning Sacrifice of Christ*, which Sacrifice was adumbrated *not by Isaac's*, for his blood was not shed, but by the OFFERING OF THE GOAT OR MALE LAMB. The peculiarity from which the *recorded title* of the place arises, is the extraordinary fulfilment of Abraham's most true, but involuntary prediction, "*the Lord will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.*" Isaac, the representative of the faithful sons of Abraham, or, in other words, *of all believers*, asks, Where is the Lamb? and receives the remarkable answer, *God will provide a Lamb*. Abraham, as father of the faithful, acknowledges by laying his son upon the altar, that all our lives are forfeited to God, and at the same time manifests his faith in God's promises, that "*in Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting*" (as the Apostle tells us) "*that God was able even to raise him from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.*" It was indeed from the dead that he received him; for, when he had raised his arm to slay him, he must have considered his life as forfeited. But observe! this figurative *resurrection* of the representative of the faithful children of Abraham—this restoration IS NOT GRANTED WITHOUT BLOOD. The Patriarch is taught that we are *bought with a price*; that the *restoration* \* is through *an atoning sacrifice* †. *The ram taken in the thicket is the type*

\* I shall presently have occasion to shew that *restoration* is what is uniformly implied in the notion of atoning Sacrifice.

† This directly contradicts Mr. Davison's assertion, that "No expiation or atonement is joined with this emblematic oblation;" and



*of Christ.* GOD WILL PROVIDE A LAMB said the Father of the faithful; and God did provide one, figurative of that Lamb, which He hath provided to "take away the sins of the world." GOD WILL PROVIDE \* was the prophetic remark *before* the Sacrifice—GOD WILL PROVIDE † was the *name* attached to the place *after* the Sacrifice—the *name recorded*, to convey to the remotest ages the prophetic character of the transaction; to shew, that the male lamb, *provided* by God, made *atonement* for forfeited life, and pre-figured the spotless Lamb, by whose Sacrifice atonement should be made for all mankind.

Can any thing be added to render this type still more plain, yes, one circumstance may yet be added. "Abraham took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering *INSTEAD* of his son."

Here the expiatory and vicarious character of the type is strongly marked; and I contend, that, in this Sacrifice, we have the clearest indications, that animal Sacrifice was typical and piacular before the law. That this transaction adumbrates more circumstances of the Christian scheme, than any previous type, is quite obvious; but to Mr. Davison's assumption, that, "In the surrender to sacrifice of a beloved son, the Patriarchal church *begins* with an adumbration of Christian reality;" it affords not the slightest foundation. Sacrifice was the continual and uniform practice of the Patriarchal church *before* this event; there is no *change*, nothing *new* either in the symbol, or in the manner of its being offered; the *lamb* the symbol of God's eternal purpose of remission by blood, was the type given to the church from the *very fall*, and the type given also

at once bars the inference (which even in the *other* view of this type is open to formidable objections) that "consequently it was a symbol only of the *Act*, not of the *Power* and *Virtue* of the *Christian Sacrifice*."

\* אלהים יראה ver. 8.

† יהוה יראה ver. 14.



in this very instance. The *restoration* of Isaac typified the *restoration* of all true children of Abraham through faith, the lamb, provided by God, typified the great, and *meritorious* Sacrifice, by which the restoration of the faithful, even from the dead, should be finally achieved \*.

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## CHAPTER IX.

*Mr. Davison's supposed "internal reason" against the existence of expiatory sacrifice antecedently to the Mosaic law.*

"I OFFER it," says Mr. Davison, "in the next place to be considered that, as the Scripture history does not furnish the proof of atoning oblations in the first ages of the world, so there is one internal reason which renders it highly improbable, that an institution of that kind then existed. For, I ask, if Sacrifices of expiation and atonement were given to that early

\* The other question, whether there was "any contemporary disclosure made of the mystical import of this sacrifice," will be considered under another head of our subject.

Mr. D. says, "It" (this type) "stands at the head of the dispensation of revealed religion, as reduced into covenant with the people of God in the person of their founder and progenitor." If by "the people of God" he means *all believers*, the proposition here advanced is highly objectionable, for "the dispensation of revealed religion" was "reduced into covenant" even with Adam. This is in fact a restatement of the opinion, which he has advanced in his work on prophecy: "That there were *no signs* in the Flood *nor in any thing before or after it that the worst evil of the fall had been done away.*" I shall not enter upon this point here, but shall merely observe that so long as the first promise, the death of Abel, and the translation of Enoch, (See Dr. Graves' Lect. on the Pentateuch, Part III. Lect. iv. v. 1.) stand upon record; so long that proposition cannot be maintained. 1. Respecting the true nature of the covenant with Abraham, and that portion of it which was really *new*, and *peculiar* to him, I beg to refer the reader to the Appendix to my Sermons. p. 427—434.

time, of what were they expiatory? For what offences did they ratify the atonement? For moral transgression, no doubt: for sin estimated according to the great law of God. The ceremonial law did not exist. The moral only could be the rule of duty to the primitive world. It only, therefore, could receive the rite of expiation. But since expiation for moral sin was not the privilege of the later dispensation, that of Moses: since atonement for all the greater instances of transgression, and even in the extent of man's ordinary obliquity of practice, was not included in the operation of the Mosaic rites; had such an institute of atonement been granted, in the first period of things, to the primeval race, the divine economy would have been retrograde; a sacrament of grace and pardon would have been withdrawn; or, which is the same thing, it would have reduced from greater purposes to less; and all this is a change in the revealed ratification of the Divine mercy, and the remedial provisions of the Divine law, a change of disproportion in the appointment, and of loss and disfavour in the effect, which is highly inconsistent with our best notions of the progressive order of revealed religion, and with the actual evidences of that order contained in the general system of it. If the worshipper under the law sought in vain for a Sacrifice to take away sin, and absolve his conscience from the burden of his moral guilt, we must be slow to believe that the penitent before the law stood on better ground, or had promises and appointments of greater efficacy. David knew of no such Sacrifice ordained; and therefore Abel and Noah scarcely could have had the privilege of it \*."

Of all his reasonings upon this head the keystone is a supposed fact, which, certain as he appears to consider it, I think he cannot establish; viz. that

\* Davison on Sacrifice, p. 84, 85.

under the law there was *no atonement for moral transgression*. The learned Archbishop of Dublin has, with his usual ability and discrimination, examined this point; and adduced arguments, which Mr. D. has not set aside. Of these I shall, as occasion may require, avail myself in refutation of Mr. Davison's positions, and shall also endeavour to produce some additional circumstances, and reasonings. The following is the order in which the arguments here to be adduced may be distributed.

1st. I shall offer some general remarks upon the efficacy of legal atonement in cases of moral transgression.

We shall examine: 2dly, Those cases of moral transgression, for which atonement is confessedly provided, and which Mr. Davison describes as furnishing a "*qualification or abatement* in the debility of the law."

3dly. The special case of Levit. xix. 20. compared with Deut. xxii. 25—29.

4thly. St. Paul's account of the Debility of the Law, and his terming it the "ministration of death."

5thly, And lastly, Mr. Davison's reasonings on what he terms, the "*progressive*" character of God's dispensations.

These, I believe, are all his positions, connected with this supposed *internal* evidence against the expiatory character of the primeval Sacrifices.

1. With respect to the efficacy of Legal Atonement in cases of moral transgression.

The denial of atonement for moral transgression has been advanced by Mr. Davison with a confidence, which, I think, will startle every reader.

His notions upon the subject of Atonement are, I think, by no means clear or accurate. Let us endeavour to ascertain what it really implies. It implies principally a sinner's *restoration to God's favour*, whether the consequence of that restoration



be the remission of temporal, or of eternal punishments.

The promises and threats of the law, were, it is admitted, of a temporal \* nature. But, whatsoever their nature, they were respectively the appointed consequences of God's *displeasure*, or of his *favour*. And it was the unquestionably declared intent of Sacrifice, to restore the offerer to the latter, and release him from the former. The Israelites lived under a theocracy, which had in view two important objects, the maintenance of the peace of civil society, and the preservation of the people from idolatry. Both these objects were promoted by the interposition of an *extraordinary providence*, and every offence against the state, as well as every violation of the ritual, intended as a security against idolatry, became an offence *against God*. And, therefore, *independently* of the punishment inflicted either by God or by the magistrate for the sake of public *example*, and the maintenance of these two objects; God threatened divers temporal evils which *He* would bring upon the *disobedient*; as being also guilty in his sight, and deserving his wrath. *These latter* were to be remitted by certain appointed offerings, which were to make *atonement*, and thus, by the agency of the Priest, God's authorised Minister, the offender, whose disobedience had rendered him *unfit* to approach God, was *re-admitted* to the service of the tabernacle, the *external sign* of his being *restored* to God's favour. This was the principal object of the private offerings appointed to be presented by *individuals* to atone for certain offences, and these offerings were expiatory in every sense of the word; they were no less so than Christ's Sacrifice; they

\* But it will be borne in mind, that when I say that the promises of the Law were temporal, it is a very different proposition from this,—that *those under the Law* had *no other* than temporal promises. Of this I shall presently speak more at large.

were the appointed means of remission of a *punishment* incurred by sin, and of the restoration of the offender to the privileges of God's favour. It matters not whether these punishments, and these privileges were temporal or spiritual. An atonement was made. And these *private* offerings appear to have been generally provided for such offences indifferently as were cognizable either by the Priest or by the civil magistrate. Yet the atonement made by these offerings had reference to the offence solely in respect to its effect, in having rendered the offender an object of *God's* displeasure ; as having *disobeyed* a law which had his express sanction. *Forgiveness* by God implies that an offence *against God* has been committed ; and that offence was not against God merely as head of the *Theocracy*, but also as Lord of all things, in whose sight *disobedience*, whether *under*, or *before* law was *sin*. But there were many moral offences, which would come under the cognizance of neither Priest nor magistrate, and had no immediate reference to the welfare of society, or to the regulations for the prevention of idolatry ; yet to these also, God affixed temporal sanctions ; and to the whole moral code the denunciation of his *displeasure*, or the promise of his *favour* was applied, accordingly as the Israelites should be *obedient*, or *disobedient*. For these cases provision was made sometimes by special offerings, but perhaps principally by the daily, weekly, and other *public* Sacrifices ; and especially on the great day of expiation described in the 16th chapter of Leviticus, in which we read the following remarkable passages :—

“ For on that day shall the Priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from ALL your sins. It shall be a Sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall *afflict your souls* by a statute for ever.

“ And this shall be an everlasting statute unto



you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for ALL their sins once a year."—Verses 30, 31, 34.

The parallel so beautifully drawn in the Epistle to the Hebrews, between the atonement made by our Saviour, and that made on this occasion, by the High Priest, is known too well to need repetition here. And it appears to me almost impossible to mistake the Apostle's argument, when he speaks of the necessity of *repeated*, because *imperfect* atonement offered by the High Priest, and compares it with the *one perfect* atonement of Christ; if we understand them *both* to be atonements for *moral transgression*; whereas if we deny that the atonement of the High Priest respected moral transgression, the parallel loses much of its aptitude, and indeed the principal feature in which the typical resemblance between the two atonements consists\*.

\* I must observe here that in this parallel there is a very remarkable and distinct testimony given by the Apostle to the *typical* and *expiatory* import of Sacrifice from the beginning of the world. For he says, that had Christ's Sacrifice not been more perfect than that offered by the High Priest, he must have suffered often, "*since the foundation of the world.*" The following are the words in which the Apostle draws his parallel:—

"Nor yet that Christ should offer himself often, as the High Priest entereth into the Holy Place once a year with the blood of others; (for then must He *often* have suffered *since the foundation of the world* :) but now *once* in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin."—Heb. ix. 25, 26.

The inference to be drawn from this parallel is, that expiatory Sacrifice *was* offered *often*, and from the *foundation of the world*,—meaning from the earliest ages. But the distinction between the typical and the real Sacrifice, was, that the former must be repeated on account of repeated transgressions, and the latter was offered *once for all*.



## CHAPTER X.

*Examination of those cases of Moral Transgression, for which atonement was confessedly provided; and which Mr. Davison describes as "furnishing an abatement, or qualification" in the debility of the Law.*

II. BUT Mr. Davison *admits*, that there are, what he terms, cases, furnishing "an *abatement* or *qualification* in the debility of the Law." This, in effect, is admitting, that his position respecting the inefficacy of the Law in cases of moral transgression, is *unsound* \*. For if the *principle* of atonement for moral transgression be distinctly declared in *some* cases, we may surely extend the *principle* to the great atonement, which is expressly said to be for **ALL** the sins of the people; and for which indeed it is difficult to assign an adequate object, unless it comprehend such cases. But let this "*abatement* and *qualification*" be examined; we shall find it far more extensive than Mr. Davison appears disposed to allow.

"The whole range," he says, "of the Mosaic sacrificial *atonements* may be comprised in the following classes of subjects, for which those atonements were provided. 1. Bodily impurity. 2. Ceremonial offence. 3. Sins of ignorance and inadvertency, or

\* His argument, if admitted in its fullest extent, would do no more than prove that there were only *some* cases of moral transgression, for which there was PRIVATE atonement. But it would, at the same time, prove; that the application of atonement to cases of moral transgression was *not inconsistent* with God's dispensation under the law. And, if it were proved, that atonement *might* be applied to moral transgressions, by what process of reasoning could we presume to exclude them from the operation of the *general* atonement, which was expressly declared, to be for **ALL** the sins of the people.

offences "unwittingly done\*." 4. Certain specified cases of moral transgression knowingly committed, in favour of which an exception from the general severity of the law was admitted, and an atonement ordained †.

"These last cases furnish that qualification, &c." (p. 91.)

In the first place I deny, that these classes, taken in the sense, in which Mr. Davison understands them, do comprise the whole range of Mosaic *atonements*; and rest my denial upon the express declaration that the yearly atonement, Levit. xvi. was for "ALL the sins of the people."

But waving that point, let us look at these several classes. Mr. Davison altogether divests the first three of such a character as can attribute to them a moral guilt in the sight of God. Has he even taken a correct view of these? I contend, he has not, and that he must add, at *least*, the first and third classes to his list of "*abatements and qualifications*."

1. "Bodily impurity." Upon this point I submit to Mr. Davison the following account from Outram, whose judgment, and candour he very deservedly reveres.

"Accedit etiam, quod lepra, ac sanguinis, seminisque fluxio EX VITA MINUS SANCTE ACTA ORTUM SEPENUMERO HABERET. Quo minus mirum, si sacra lege cautum esset, ut morbis illis inquinati piaculari hostiâ purgarentur." Lib. I. cap. xii. s. 4.

Dr. Jennings expresses himself to the same effect.

"We allow the woman had not properly contracted guilt by her child-bearing, nor the leper by his disease, but as the pains of child-bearing, and as all the diseases to which the human body is incident (of which leprosy, according to the account travellers have given of it in eastern countries, seems to be

\* See Levit. iv. 2. 13. 22. 27. Num. xv. 24. 27.

† Levit. vi. 1. 7.

the most grievous) are *the fruits, and consequences of the apostasy, and of sin*, which hath brought these calamities on human nature, it was highly proper, that, on occasion of a deliverance from these remarkable effects of sin, there should be an humble acknowledgment made of the desert of it in general, and a piacular Sacrifice offered *for original and for all actual* transgressions; which I take to be the intent of such Sacrifices on these occasions \*."

2. "Ceremonial offences." These had reference to certain objects peculiar to the existing circumstances of the Israelites, upon the consideration of which it will be unnecessary for me to enter; as my argument does not require that atonement should be proved to be applicable to *nothing* but moral transgression.

Yet even these, (through that law, which caused offence to abound,) frequently assumed a certain character of guilt, as arising from want of precaution, and from inattention to the regulations of the law.

3. "Sins of ignorance and inadvertency, or offences unwittingly done."

I cannot suppose Mr. Davison unacquainted with the fact, that most of our ablest writers upon this subject, and some too, for whose judgment he has expressed the greatest respect; consider sins of ignorance as comprehending not only such as are "done unwittingly," or from absolute ignorance, but also *all such*, as are opposed to sins of *presumption*. (See Numbers xv.) And sin of *presumption*, as Outram has justly observed, "*certum nullum indicat peccati sed certam peccandi rationem.*" Of the character too of the sin of presumption he cites with approbation the description given by Maimonides, "*Elata manu peccat ille, qui frontem perfricat, palamque peccat, qualisquisque, contra legem facit, non tantum, quod libidine sua, pravisque cupi-*

\* Vide also Magee on Atonement, vol. i. 362



*ditatibus victus in rem vetitam abripiatur, sed quia legi fidem derogat, eique plane repugnare vult."* &c. Outram, 142.

By sins of ignorance were understood then not such only as were "done unwittingly," but also "all other sins against that law," (the law of Moses) "which were the result of *human frailty*, and did not proceed from a cool deliberate contempt of God, and his authority as king of Israel, even such sins as offenders were excited to the commission of by sensual *appetites and passions*, and by the influence of *evil example* and *external temptation*; and did commit *knowingly*, and against the dictates, and remonstrances of their consciences\*." The expiation for sins of ignorance was for all sins (Levit. iv. 2.) excepting those, which were threatened with *excision*, and those for which an atonement was specially provided. The strong arguments adduced by Archbishop Magee (No. xxxvii.) and by Dr. Richie, and others, in proof of this point, surely deserved at least some notice: and the brief assumption, with which Mr. D. at once excludes these sins from the catalogue of moral offences, is scarcely consistent either with the respect due to these writers, or with that candour, which should at least have *hinted*, that some difference of sentiment prevailed on this point, and that the opinion, opposed to Mr. D.'s simple dictum, was embraced by several of our standard writers on this question.

Far from being excluded from the "*abatement*," sins of ignorance comprehend so vast a range of moral transgression †, that to call them an "*abatement*," would be a very close approximation to that figure of speech, which is supposed (with what justice I shall not determine) to be peculiar to the sprightly inhabitants of our sister island. I have

\* Richie Pec. Doct. vol. i. 226.

† The ample provision of atonement for sins of ignorance may be seen stated in Richie's Peculiar Doctrine, p. 249, 250, 251.

not repeated the arguments of Magee, and Richie, but recommend the reader to consult them, if he can entertain the slightest doubt of the sense, in which sins of ignorance are spoken of under the law. But we now come to that class, which *according to Mr. Davison*, “constitute the *abatement*, and *qualification* to the debility of the law.”

4. “*Certain specified cases of moral transgression knowingly committed, in favour of which an exception from the general severity of the law was admitted, and an atonement ordained\**.”

1st. Let us see what these cases, *according to Mr. D. himself*, were.—*Breach of trust—deceiving a partner, or breaking a contract—robbery—fraud—lying, for the purpose of retaining things found—and perjury to avoid confessing theft or fraud.*

A tolerably formidable catalogue of “*abatements, and qualifications!*” Surely upon the strength of these we may call upon Mr. Davison, as I have said, to inform us upon what principle it could be maintained, that a law appointing special atonements for moral offences, *such as these*, may not be interpreted as admitting of atonement for *other* moral offences; when it *expressly declares*, that it has one general atonement for ALL “the sins of the people.”

2ndly. But it is not necessary to concede to Mr. Davison, even that the atonement here mentioned, is confined to those very *specified* cases. I contend, that these are a few cases adduced, to illustrate the condition on which atonement is appointed, with the nature of the restitution and repentance, which are necessary to its acceptance. “In any of these *sorts* of things,” (says Patrick, Levit. vi. 3.) “so the Hebrew may be translated.”

The word מכל signifies simply *ex omnibus* †, not of “all *these*” as our translation has it. And the

\* Levit. vi. 1. 7.

† See Ainsworth, as also all the versions of the London Polyglott.

true sense of the passage appears to be; concerning one, or any one *of all that a man doeth*, sinning in these; meaning whatsoever sin of *this sort* a man shall commit, in this manner he shall make amends, this *proof* he shall give of his penitence, and this offering he shall bring as an atonement before God.

3dly. I deny that Mr. Davison is correct, when he states that these were "offences, in *favour of which an exception* from the general severity of the law was admitted." Where does Mr. D. find this asserted, or intimated?

He has most completely mistaken the matter. The restitution here mentioned is not a mitigated *penalty enforced* by the civil Magistrate. For in the case of theft, and of denying things committed to a man's trust, the punishment upon *detection* was *double* \* restitution. But here we have the *conditions* imposed upon a *penitent*, but *undetected* offender. The general severity of the law was not mitigated "in favour of certain *specified cases of moral transgression* knowingly committed."

This was a purely *voluntary* act; it was the *condition* in which an offender, who should be struck with remorse for his crime, and should be desirous of making amends for his transgression, was taught that God would accept his atonement. The making this restitution, when he might have escaped human cognizance, was the token of his *repentance*, and his offering the Sacrifice was the manifestation of his *faith* in God's appointed means of atonement.

The penalty to which these offences were liable from the civil magistrate was not *exacted at all* †;

\* Exod. xxii. 7.

† It was manifestly to the public *benefit* that these acts of voluntary restitution should be encouraged, and the penalty of the law not exacted, even should the matter afterwards come to the knowledge of the magistrate. The social purposes of example, and protection of property, were better answered by these, than by the exaction of the penalty of the law. But this by no means amounts to remission of civil punishment on *account of an atonement made*.



the matter did not come under his cognizance because the offender had eluded detection. Therefore, as far as the *civil magistrate* was concerned, there was no *exception* in favour of these *specified* cases of transgression. And the punishment which might be apprehended from the *Divine wrath*, must surely be far from *mitigated* in favour of these *specified offences*. Surely in *His* eyes *theft and perjury* \* cannot be held in a more favourable light than *theft alone*, but rather to be regarded with greater abhorrence, and visited with heavier punishment.

The severity of the law was not mitigated in favour of any particular offence. For, if these cases of moral transgression were detected, they were liable to *all* the punishment due *by the Law* to the *double* offence. If they were not detected, and were persisted in, then the offender virtually defied God, and finally involved himself in all the guilt, and incurred all the punishment denounced by God against *presumptuous sin*.

Therefore the *penalty*, whether to be exacted by the magistrate, or inflicted by God, was not *mitigated* in favour of these specified offences, but a *repentant* sinner was entirely forgiven; and the token of his repentance, an earnest endeavour to make reparation for the evil he had committed, was required as a previous condition to the acceptance of his atonement. But it was the *atonement*, not the *restitution*, which was the ostensibly *meritorious cause* of forgiveness.

Punishment was inflicted for *example*, and *against the will* of the offender. It had no reference to Divine forgiveness. But restitution, previous to offering an atonement, did in no wise partake of the nature of *punishment*. It was a voluntary act of repentance and amendment, performed when none was privy to the guilt of the offerer, but God, and his own soul. This was the *condition* of acceptance. It is a misnomer to call it a mitigated *penalty*. It was the scale of restitution, wherewith the penitent was assured he might bring his offering to God.

\* Compare Lev. vi. 5. with Exod. xxii. 2.

The sacrificial atonement of the law being, as we have observed, the means of averting the effects of *God's* displeasure, and of restoring the offender to that favour which he had forfeited; to suppose that, upon repentance, the offender, who suffered the *heavier* penalty for the *smaller* crime, was not *with respect to the means of atonement*, at least, upon an equal footing with him, who had been guilty of these *specified cases* of moral offence, in *favour of which* Mr. D. has fancied there was a *mitigation* of the general severity of the law;—involves the glaring absurdity, which I have already mentioned; it exhibits the Almighty as making this exception in favour of *perjury and theft*, and accepting an atonement, when he would admit of none for *theft alone*\*.

So far from its being, as Mr. D. affirms, "*most obvious*, that there was some special design of *civil*

\* Exodus xxii. 24. Lev. vi. 5. Here are two cases of moral offence, the one of detected theft; the other in which detection had been avoided by perjury. The former offender is compelled to make *double* restitution; the latter is allowed to pay *one-fifth*. But, according to Mr. Davison, an exception is made in *favour* of the latter offence, and an atonement is permitted, which is *denied* to the former. Hence it follows, that he who has been guilty of the *lesser* crime, not only pays the *heavier penalty*, but also is *excluded* from the appointed means of *forgiveness*; while the *favoured* crime, of *theft and perjury*, both pays a mitigated penalty, and its author is admitted, by atonement, to God's favour. I deny this preposterous doctrine. I contend, that atonement is open to the former, as well as to the latter, moral transgression. Is it asked, where it is appointed; I answer, "If any one of the common people sin through ignorance while he doeth somewhat against *any* of the commandments of the Lord, concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty, then he shall bring," &c. &c. Lev. iv. 27. If no atonement were provided for the man, who had been *detected* and paid the *penalty*, one of these two conclusions must follow. Either the *penalty* per se was accepted, and thus procured forgiveness; in which case the moral guilt was pardoned by God without reference either to the *penitence* of the offender, or to any *expiation*. Or the *penalty* was not accepted, and no means of reconciliation were offered to him; in which case the *INEXPIABLE* guilt of moral offence would consist, not in the nature of the crime, but solely in *DETECTION*. In the former case, that a penalty exacted should have any efficacy in

policy in relation to *public society* regulating the exceptions made;" the fact is, that they had no reference at all, when connected with atonement, to civil policy; they referred to *God's* acceptance of atonement; and the restitution, they enjoin, has little more concern with the regulations of public society, than the *similar* condition enjoined by our Saviour; "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; *first be reconciled* to thy brother, and *then* come and offer thy gift." (Matt. v. 23, 24.)

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## CHAPTER XI.

*The special case of Levit. xix. 20. compared with Deut. xxii. 25, 29.*

IV. WE come next to his special case. "One single offence more," says Mr. Davison, "there is, for which an atonement was allowed, viz. the sin of unchastity, when one of the offending parties was a *bondmaid* and *betrothed*\*. But then we observe that the like offence, if in the person of a *free woman*†, was not susceptible of a sacrificial expiation."

taking away guilt is incredible. And in the latter, that guilt should consist in *detection*, is a creed which, since the days of Sparta, has been peculiar to men, to whose notions of morality Mr. D. would be sorry to lend the slightest countenance.

\* Levit. xix. 20. "They shall not be put to death *because she was not free.*"

† Deut. xxii. 25, 27.



I have copied his typography, and it is evident, that the inference, which he thinks, ought to be drawn from these cases, is, that the *reason* of an atonement being *admitted* in one case was, *because* the woman was a *bondwoman*; and of its being *refused* in the other, *because* the woman was *free*. A less acute and discriminating mind than that of Mr. Davison, might, I should have imagined, have been awakened to a suspicion of some fallacy, by the very *consequence* of his interpretation, namely, that, as atonement was the means of restoration to *God's service and favour*, his interpretation caused God's *abhorrence* of a great *moral crime*, to be measured by the mere external circumstance of the *freedom* or *bondage* of the woman. But he has misinterpreted the very letter of these cases. The bondage or freedom of the woman was the criterion, by which the *civil punishment* \* was apportioned, and not the *possibility of God* being reconciled to the offender estimated. "They *shall not be put to death*, because she was not free." The woman was scourged. And the man, *if penitent*, might bring his offering, and could *not be re-admitted, to partake of the public worship till he had done so*. The reason, for which there was no atonement appointed in the other case was, *because, by the social sentence of the law, the parties were put to death, and consequently could not be re-admitted to the public rites of religion; the external, and visible* † tokens of their sharing the temporal

\* Any person who has considered with attention the practice of both the Patriarchal and Mosaic polity, must perceive at a glance, that this distinction in the civil punishment was founded upon the polygamic licence of these times respecting a man's taking to his bed a bondmaid. It is no part of my present enquiry to investigate the extent, or the reasons of this licence. Its existence is notorious. The *bondwoman* did not come under the provisions of the sacrificial law.

† This was one peculiarity of the law adapted to the grossness and perverseness of the Jews, that it acted upon their *outward sense*, and *present fears* by a multiplicity of *external and visible* tokens of God's favour or displeasure. When an offence was committed, the

privileges, and the *type* of their sharing the spiritual and eternal privileges of God's favour, if they continued in it. But this is the very reverse of Mr. D.'s inference. The proposition is not convertible. That there could be no *appointed* private atonement *because a man was condemned to death*; is by no means the same proposition as, that a man was *condemned to death, because there was no appointed atonement*. I believe that, in respect to the ultimate and typified *object* of atonement, *restoration to God's favour*, both these offenders stood upon an equal footing; that if they were *penitent*, both shared in the benefit of that *great atonement*, which was made for the sins of the *whole* world; which was prefigured by the *daily, weekly*, and especially by the great *annual* expiation, made for ALL the sins of the people. The parallel with this, drawn by St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, at least forbids us to limit the mercy of God; if it does not warrant us in presuming, that this embraced all cases which, from their nature, would not *admit* of the offering of a *private* atonement, and that none was excluded from its range but the *faithless*, the *impenitent*, the PRESUMPTUOUS sinner, who *died* in his iniquity, *defying* his God \*.

Jew became forthwith *unfit for the tabernacle service*, and thus excluded from the special protection of God. An atonement must be offered; for he knew that, if he dared to approach without it, he was under a special Providence, and would be visited according to his presumption. *Present forgiveness*, and admission to the *external service* of God, was the immediately covenanted promise of the law. The appointed atonement being accepted signified, not only to the individual, but also to the *congregation*, that he was restored to God's favour, and was not to be considered as an *excommunicated*, or an unclean person. But in the case of a person's being put to death there was no opportunity, or occasion to give a *visible* token, either to the individual; or to the congregation, that he was re-admitted to the service, or to the favour of God.

\* If it were held that no atonement was to be accepted *because* death was inflicted by the civil magistrate for the punishment of an offence, it might be held, *a fortiori*, that there was no atonement



In the view, I have taken of these two special cases, I am bound in candour to observe, that part of my statements involve me in a difference of opinion, not only with Mr. Davison, but also with that able writer\*, whose work on the atonement has been almost universally received as a standard book. Indeed, I believe, few, if any, have taken altogether the same views of the subject, as that, on which I found my reasonings.

I have, therefore, in the Appendix thrown together a few remarks on this subject, and discussed the points, in which I dissent from Dr. Magee, and others. It would cause too long a digression from the portion of Mr. Davison's book, now before me, to enter into the consideration of them here; and I shall only briefly state the substance of my opinions upon the efficacy of atonement under the Law, in the following propositions, which, I trust, I have already cleared from such objections, as might be supposed to exist against them in the *cases* brought forward by Mr. Davison :—

I. Sacrificial Atonement, under the Law, did not procure the remission of *Death* for any offence, for which it was to be *inflicted by the civil magistrate*.

II. Atonement, under the Law, might *suspend*, but *did not avert*, the sentence of death *by the hand of God*, pronounced against *disobedience* to the precepts of the Law.

III. The *immediate* object of private atonement was the restoration of the offender to God's present favour, and covenanted protection; of which restoration the *visible sign* was the re-admission of him to the *service*, and worship of God, by his appointed minister and mediator the priest. This was the effect covenanted *by the Law*.

IV. The *ultimate* object of *all* sacrificial atonement for any person, because *all* die; and death is the *punishment* of sin inflicted by the *hand of God*.

\* See Appendix, No. I.



ment, (as applicable to moral guilt, and referable to death as the punishment of guilt), was the RESTORATION of life,—not the *averting of death*; but the restoration of life, which was *forfeited* by every sinner, and which forfeit was, is, and shall be exacted from every man, that cometh into the world. Consequently I maintain, that the atonement for transgression \* *under* the Law had, as its proper object, *restoration* to Divine favour, both *present* and *future*; and that when God declared, in general terms, that He had given them the blood upon the altar, to make atonement for their lives; he meant, that it was the *appointed* means (perhaps of *suspending* the present operation of the general sentence, and) of *redeeming* them from death, by *restoring* them to eternal life. I shall not here enter at large upon these points, but the limitations under which I hold this doctrine, and some arguments upon it will come under our consideration in the other points of Mr. Davison's reasonings, which I proposed to examine.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### *The New Testament account of the Debility of the Law.*

I SHALL open this part of our discussion with a statement, and a question, put forth by Mr. Davison, as involving us in the dilemma of either conceding his point, or contradicting St. Paul.

“ In one word, ask of St. Paul what was the style

\* Atonement, as applied to things, means consecrating, and rendering fit that, which by its nature, or contracted defilement, was before unfit for Divine worship.

of the Law? He will answer, it was 'the ministration of death.' But how could it be the ministration of death, if its penal sanctions had, opposed to them, any great antagonist charter of remedial expiation\*?"

In this passage two questions are presented, of which the subjects appear to be, by no means, clearly understood. Let us examine them, and see whether some light may not be thrown upon them, so as to enable us to pass from between the two formidable horns of Mr. Davison's dilemma, without being transfixed upon either.

I. What is the *sense*, in which St. Paul terms the law the "ministration of death?"

II. How could it "be the ministration of death, if its penal sanctions had opposed to them any great antagonist charter of remedial expiation?"

I. The *sense*, in which St. Paul terms the law the ministration of death.

Connected with this part of our subject, are some reasonings used by Warburton†, which probably have not been without influence in confirming Mr. Davison in his views, and the interpretation of this phrase of St. Paul's.

His interpretation of 1 Tim. iv. 8. (that under the Jewish dispensation was the reward of the life that now is, but under the Christian only of that which is to come), is, as Macknight, upon the text has proved, contradicted by various passages of Scripture, is not conveyed in the plain import of the words, and is not required, by the obvious design of St. Paul's argument; which is to *contrast* bodily exercise with godliness; the one profiting *little*, the other profitable in *all* respects, both present and future.

The reasonings on which he attempts to establish

\* Davison on Sac, p. 93.

† Book v. Sec. 6.

his construction, however ingenious, are sophistical. Those built upon 1 Cor. xv. 19. are false in the following points :—

I. It is by no means certain that the error he was opposing was that of the Sadducees. (See Macknight's introduction to this chapter.)

II. Admitting that his opponents were Sadducees, and that *by* the law there were only temporal promises, it would not follow, that there were only temporal promises *under* the Law. In fact, our Lord seems very plainly to teach, that in this respect the opinion of the Sadducees was an error ; in his well-known refutation of them, wherein he tells them, that God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and not the God of the dead, but of the living ; he distinctly refers to that evangelical promise, which was not indeed *by* the Law, but *under* the Law,—for the promise was *not annulled* by the Law.

III. The plain interpretation of 1 Tim. iv. 8. does not at all injure the force of St. Paul's argument in 1 Cor. xv. 19. For in the latter he reasons, not from the *general* tendency of *godliness* under the Christian dispensation, but from the *particular circumstances* of the Christian cause *in those times* \*. He is shewing the *absurdity* of professing Christianity, and denying its fundamental doctrine, the resurrection. He observes, that to embrace Christianity was to embrace a persecuted religion, and attended, as far as the present life is concerned, with much peril, and suffering ; and consequently, if there be no future life, they are guilty of folly and inconsistency, in being baptized into such a religion. No such contrast between the Law and the Gospel, as Warburton imagines, appears in the text. Neither

\* In the Classical Journal, No. 63, I have inserted an article to elucidate the well-known text of 1 Cor. xv. 29, and to this I refer the reader, for an explanation of the particular point to which the Apostle's argument is directed.



could St. Paul debate the matter upon such grounds, (otherwise than as a concession for the sake of the argument) without setting at nought our Saviour's refutation of the Sadducean error. Neither, as I have shewn above, does the application of this statement of the general tendency of godliness affect the "strength and integrity," of the Apostle's argument to Timothy. Admitting that the Law had only the temporal promise, it surely would equally prove the superiority of *godliness*, over *bodily exercise*, to affirm that it had the promise of *both future and present* advantage, under the Christian dispensation, as to say that it had *only* the temporal in *one* case, and only the *future* promise in the *other*.

His example (Rom. vii. 15, 16.) is answered by the position I have endeavoured to establish, that though the sanctions of the law were temporal, it will not follow that the sanction of the antecedent promises did not exist *under* the law. In fact Christ being a priest *after the order* of Melchisedec, who was *before* the law, shews that the "power of an endless life" was in force before the law, and not annulled by the law.

His reasoning upon Rom. v. 12. partakes of the same erroneous bias. That the imputation of sin consisted "in there being *a* law given" is very true. But the imputation of sin does not consist solely in the law being given. St. Paul's meaning here appears to be generally misapprehended. His argument is this,—death entered by sin, for sin was in the world until the law; but it must not be supposed that there was no law, as sin is not imputed where there is no law. But death reigned from Adam to Moses, hence there must have been, previously to the law of Moses, *some* law against which men sinned\*. Warburton proceeds thus, "I ask how the Apostle could possibly say, that *death*

\* See Macknight on this passage.

*reigned under the Mosaic dispensation*, if that people had the knowledge of immortal life to be procured by a *Redeemer to come*, any more than it can be said to reign *now*, with the same knowledge of a *Redeemer past*; since we agree that the efficacy of his death extends to all preceding as well as succeeding ages? Accordingly, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, he calls the Jewish law, the MINISTRATION OF DEATH, and the MINISTRATION OF CONDEMNATION."

To Warburton's question, I answer,—I see no reason for which death, in the sense in which it is there taken, may *not* be said to reign *now*. For every thing around us too plainly declares, as well as the Apostle, that the "victory" over the LAST ENEMY (1 Cor. xv. 26.) will not be completely achieved till the *general resurrection*.

How little support his reasonings can derive from the phrases "*Ministration of Death*," and "*Ministration of Condemnation*," will be seen as we proceed.

I must now return to Mr. Davison's positions, and shew in what sense the law is termed by St. Paul the "Ministration of Death."

Mr. Davison, then, if I rightly understand him, argues that the law was termed the "Ministration of Death," because it *denounced the penalty of death* without atonement, upon *all* moral offences, excepting those cases, which he has particularized as being a sort of favoured class. Now, in the case of unchastity, where the woman was *free, immediate* and *signal* death was the consequence; BECAUSE (*argues Mr. Davison*,) there was NO ATONEMENT ALLOWED. It will, therefore, follow (as death is due to every moral offence), by a parity of reasoning, that *immediate* and *signal* death, by the hand of God, must

\* For if Mr. Davison, "by the *great body* of the commandments *claiming the blood* of the transgressor," means only death in the ordinary course of nature, I should be glad to be informed in what, according to his system, consists the distinction between the cases for which atonement is provided, and those for which it is not.



be the consequence of EVERY *moral offence*, for which, in like manner, *no atonement was allowed*, or in other words of *every* moral offence, excepting *those favoured* crimes, which Mr. Davison has claimed as forming the *qualification* and *abatement*. Where would the Jewish nation have been, in a very short time, if this theory of his were true? In the grave!

In what sense then does the Apostle term it the "Ministration of Death?" In the place from which it is quoted, he is speaking of the honourable character of the ministry which he has obtained and contrasts the covenant which he is employed to preach with the Mosaic covenant. The one he terms the Ministration of Death, because it *killeth*, the other that of the Spirit which "*giveth life*." But *how* the Mosaic covenant *killeth* he does not here mention, and we must elicit this from the nature of the covenants themselves, and from other portions of his writings.

At the very outset we are met by this *fact*, that the sentence of *death* was passed against *disobedience* to God from the BEGINNING, and moreover St. Paul himself tells us that *all* men were obnoxious to death, for that *all* have sinned. The Mosaic law therefore could not be *characterized* as the "Ministration of Death," merely because it *denounced death* as the penalty of *disobedience*. That penalty had been *already* denounced under the anterior dispensation, and could not constitute the *distinctive* character of the Mosaic law.

But if we turn to the Epistle to the Romans, we there meet a detailed and ample account of the peculiarity which causes St. Paul to affix to the Mosaic law this epithet. In this Epistle his "theme" is the folly of trusting for salvation to the works of the law. How does he establish his point? By *this*, among other arguments: That where there is no law sin is not imputed. But the revelation of a



law *ministers* to condemnation, because man *transgresses* the law ; and thus becomes obnoxious to the primeval sentence of *death* as the penalty of *disobedience*. Even from Adam to Moses death reigned, because the *law of nature* \* was disobeyed. But then the Mosaic law entered (παρεισηλθεν † entered in addition) was *superadded* to the law of nature, and both by the clearness of its revelation and the multitude of its duties, which were *disobeyed*, increased man's condemnation and left him inexcusable. St. Paul reasons ‡ that Adam was the type of Christ, inasmuch as by one all died, so by one all shall be made alive again. But then he shews the more abundant mercy of God in the free gift of justification by "the obedience of one." And to manifest the free mercy of God, he observes that, though all men were already in justice subject to death "*Moreover* (in addition to the causes of condemnation already in the world) the law entered, that the offence might *ABOUND*, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

The law, then, is the "*ministration of death*," and the "*ministration of condemnation*," not because it *denounces* the penalty of death upon transgressions, but because it *convicts* men of sin, and causes (not from its own imperfection, but through man's corruption) transgression to *abound*, and thus increases the number of those *sins*, for which man was obnoxious to death from the sentence *already* denounced. Hence we find St. Paul arguing § that man could not be justified *by* the law ; "*Because the law worketh wrath*, for where no law is there is no transgression." Again ; "the motions of the sins which were by the law (or in other words our

\* Rom. i. and ii. comp. with Rom. v. 14.

† Rom. v. 20. Macknight says "*privily*" entered. This interpretation, I think, weakens the force of the Apostle's argument.

‡ Rom. v. 14.

§ Rom. iv. 15.

corrupt inclinations to *disobey* the revealed duties of the law) did work in our members to bring forth *fruit* unto *death* \*;" thus ministering to establish the dominion of death. Thus also in the following verses † he shews, that this tendency of the law was not owing to any defect of the law, but to man's own corruptness; and the very goodness of the law tended to magnify God's mercy, and leave man without excuse, in having turned that, which was good, to a means of his own condemnation; in making that "which was ordained to life," a cause of *death*. Hence also the law is termed (1 Cor. xv. 56) the strength (*δυναμις*) or *power* of sin.

This is the peculiarity of the law which is designated by the "*ministration of death*:" not the *denouncing* of death without atonement against offences, but the *causing* offences, against which death had been *already* ‡ denounced, to *abound*, the bringing forth *fruit* unto death.

Hence it is that the apostle magnifies the mercy of God in sending his Son into the world, and teaches, that as the works of the law, from not having been observed, are the ground of the increase of condemnation, they are not to be relied upon for salvation, but men must be justified by faith in Christ. And from this is deduced the greater necessity of atonement to redeem mankind from the condemnation, both of the Mosaic law, and of the law of nature.

II. But Mr. Davison has asked, "How could it be the ministration of death, if its penal sanctions had opposed to them any great antagonist charter of remedial expiation?"

I have already shewn how it *is* termed the "*ministration of death*;" and if this be the proper sense of the phrase, to contend that this ministration of death *could* not have had an antagonist charter of reme-

\* Rom. vii. 5. † Ibid. ver. 7—14. ‡ Gen. ii. 17. iii. 19.



dial expiation, would be to doom to eternal destruction all who were born previously to the coming of our Saviour. It has also been proved that such a charter *was* opposed to it. I might, therefore, rest upon this position, and say, that I am not concerned, to shew *how* it *could* be called a "ministration of death," when such a charter was opposed to it. But I wish to meet Mr. Davison, not as a captious and eager wrangler, but rather as a coadjutor in one common investigation. I wish candidly and frankly to lay before him all my views of the matter taken in every bearing. The subject is interesting; much remains yet to be examined. I am conscious of the imperfect and hasty manner in which I have touched upon several points; and should rejoice if any thing, I have here struck out, could attract the acute and philosophic mind of Mr. Davison, either to rectify my errors, if errors they be, or to assist me in more effectually developing and in establishing upon a firmer basis, any new truths, calculated to illustrate our subject.

I say, then, that the law may be most properly termed the ministration of death, not from its having no great remedial charter of expiation, but because, independently of its causing sin to *abound*, the great remedial charter to that evil "though *under* the law, was not *by* the law." The simple import of atonement was RECONCILIATION. The consequences of *reconciliation* to God were twofold—temporal, and eternal. Atonement itself was not the covenant of the law. Atonement, as I have maintained from that special declaration of it in Levit. xvii. 11, was the charter of the antecedent dispensation. The law was *added* to, and did not annul, that antecedent dispensation. Sacrifice *by* the law had no other covenanted promise, than that of outward purification, and re-admission to the service of the tabernacle; the visible sign of re-admission to God's favour, and to the enjoyment of



those *temporal* privileges, which, under the theocracy were annexed to it. Therefore the law was purely a "ministration of death;" it caused offences to abound, and brought forth *fruit* unto death, while it *furnished* no atonement for their lives. All that strictly belonged to the law was completely carnal—temporal—*fruitful* unto death. But though it *furnished* no atonement for life, it possessed *under* it an atonement for life. It had under it that antecedent dispensation, to which it had been "*added* \*." And as I have contended, from Lev. xvii. 11, atonement for life, in whatever sense it may be understood, was the charter of *that* dispensation.

But here we may enter upon another very interesting question. In what sense is that "atonement made for their lives," spoken of in Lev. xvii., to be interpreted; both before, and under the law? That under the law the phrase to make "atonement for their lives" did in *some* cases refer to the temporal sanctions of the law, and designate the effect of their reconciliation to God, in averting from them some signal death, I do not mean to dispute †. But in

\* "The law was added because of transgression."

† In Lev. vii. 20, 21, are mentioned cases of uncleanness, under which a person partaking of the sacrifices is to be "cut off from his people." There is an atonement appointed for uncleanness, which atonement being made, the uncleanness was removed, and the flesh of the peace offerings might be eaten without danger of death. Thus the atonement might be said to avert death. But then, the atonement did not avert death as the *penalty* of *being unclean*. It in reality *prevented* the penalty of death from being incurred for a distinct offence. Death, in the passages in question, was the penalty of *presumptuous* sin; of daring to partake of things consecrated to God, in defiance of his prohibition, without having offered that sacrifice, which he had ordained as the sacramental means of rendering them clean in his sight, and fit to offer him service. That it would be death, then, for a person to *present himself before God* under any legal disability without atonement; is by no means the same proposition; as, that atonement averted the punishment of death, where death was the decreed punishment of some other offence.

these cases the death averted is not the legal, and *specified* penalty of any *particular* offence against the Jewish polity, but the *demonstration* of God's *wrath* against disobedience in general. It is not the punishment for the transgression, in its *relation only to the theocracy*, but also in its *moral character*, as disobedience, and distrust of God. The *punishment* probably related to *both* these, but the *atonement* only to the latter. In the *general* charter, that for instance referred to Lev. xvii. 11. I think much *more* was conveyed. This did not apparently refer to those cases for which signal death was likely to be inflicted. It partakes too much of a general charter, it refers, as I have shewn, to the antecedent dispensation; and, when we read that God had given them the blood to make atonement for their lives; we cannot but recollect that God, sooner or later, TOOK AWAY the lives of ALL men. How then was it given to make atonement *for* their lives, if it did not prevent death. How then did it make atonement for *life* but by procuring its RESTORATION? Life was forfeited by the first Adam, and regained by the last Adam. The forfeiture must and does universally take place, but life forfeited is redeemed.

*Restoration* to God's favour is throughout all the dispensations set forth as the general import of atonement. Atonement being *reconciliation* is always represented as procuring the *restitution* of something forfeited, by having become subject to displeasure.

Thus the atonement made by Christ, the substance, of which all others were but shadows, is decidedly characterised, not as averting death, but *restoring* life.

"Since by man came death," says St. Paul, "by man came also the *resurrection* of the dead. For as in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall all be *made* alive\*." He gave himself *αντιλυτρον*. (1 Tim. ii. 6.)

\* Vide Appendix, No. I.



and various other expressions might be adduced if the evidences of our daily observation were not sufficient to convince us, that the atonement made by Christ does not avert death, but procures *restoration* to life.

If this be a principal feature in the antitype, we may surely expect to discover some resemblance to it, however obscure, in the types. And accordingly in that atonement, which was strictly *by* the law we discover, as I have observed, the trace of this characteristic feature; the effect of sacrificial atonement covenanted *by* the law is to *restore* to the *visible* signs, and temporal privileges of God's favour persons, whose transgression or legal impurities *had excluded* them, and *made them unfit* for both. And so that sacrificial atonement, which was *under* the law, but was the charter of the primeval dispensation, being, as Archbishop Magee has termed it, a *sacramental memorial* of Christ's sacrifice, had the promise of *restitution* to God's favour, and of the *restoration* of life, which was universally forfeited by man's *disobedience*. Consequently even supposing, that this remedial charter implied, as I contend it did, (whether the Jews understood it so, or not,) not the mere averting, or rather suspending the sentence of death, but the actual *restoration* of life through its typical and sacramental relation to Christ's sacrifice, supposing even this, nay more admitting, it was *by* the law, still the law would be 'ministration of death.' For ALL men *suffer* death, the penalty of that sin, which the law made to *abound*, and their being afterwards ransomed *from* death could not divest the law of this character. It would still have ministered unto death, and brought forth *fruit* unto death.

The Apostle, indeed, intimates that *under* \* it the

\* In the following view of Macknight's respecting the identity of the Mosaic covenant, with that made with Adam I entirely



antagonist charter did exist; as when he says, "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound:" he adds, "but where sin abounded grace did much more abound." The curses in Deut. xxvii. by no means establish Mr. Davison's conclusion, that the persons against whom they were denounced were subject to death, as having been guilty of offences not susceptible of atonement. It only shews, that these persons were under God's displeasure,

concur. Indeed the Apostle when he speaks of the law working death, &c. appears always to refer to this. And particularly when he mentions its bringing forth *FRUIT unto death*; he seems to derive his figure from the *tree of the KNOWLEDGE of good and evil*. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Macknight upon Heb. viii. 7. says, "That the law of Moses, is called the first covenant, not merely because it was prior to the Gospel, but also because it was in reality the same with the first covenant, under which Adam was placed in Paradise: for like it, it required perfect obedience under the penalty of death; and allowed no pardon to any sinner however penitent. It is likewise to be observed, that the Gospel is called the *second covenant*, not merely because it was posterior to the law, but also because it is actually the same with the second covenant, under which Adam was placed after the fall; for it requires, not a sinless, but a sincere obedience, and grants pardon to sinners on repentance."

He might have added, affords the same remedy against the condemnation of the first covenant, viz. sacrificial atonement, by which the hope of the *restoration* of forfeited life is held out. Hence we trace the doctrine of St. Paul, upon which Mr. D. appears to think his theory so strongly supported, viz. that no man could be justified in, or by the law of Moses, the first covenant. The reason is, because that law was transgressed. But to assume, as he does, that, because no man could be justified by the law of Moses, there was therefore no atonement for moral transgression *under* the law, would be to affirm that the covenant of promise was *annulled* by the law, and thus to contradict the Apostle. Either this conclusion must be adopted, or the whole of Mr. D.'s reasonings upon the "disability of the law," fall to the ground, by admitting expiatory sacrifice to have existed before the law; and so I contend they do, as he has entirely mistaken the nature of that disability. The testimony of David proves nothing more than the clearer revelations which were vouchsafed to him of the *intrinsic* worthlessness of sacrifice, and the words used by him, were a prophetic description of the nature of the second covenant, See the parallel passage in Ps. xl. and Heb. x. 6. David, we know, notwithstanding these expressions, did offer sacrifice to make atonement.

and *needed* atonement. But whether with, or without atonement, death came upon *all* men, and men becoming subject to death, needed an atonement to procure their ransom.

Macknight has some judicious remarks upon this point, in his notes upon Gal. iii. 10. to which, though I do concur with him, in one or two particulars, I refer the reader.

These then are my conclusions :—

The law is called the "*ministration of death*," and "the ministration of condemnation," because it caused sin (against which death was denounced from the first transgression) to *abound*.

It had a "great antagonist charter of remedial expiation," but this charter though under the law, was not *by* the law, but was the charter of primeval promise\*.

That even had this charter been *by* the law, it

\* I say primeval promise ; for though the promise is said by St. Paul, to be 430 years before the law, it cannot be supposed the general promise of a Redeemer was not prior to this. The reason for which St. Paul selects that period is obvious. The Jews trusted in their exclusive, and indefeasible rights as circumcised and children of Abraham, to whom the promise was made. He shews them that circumcision was referable simply to one promise ; viz. their being children according to the flesh, who should constitute the *line* in which the promised Redeemer should come. Whereas the promise of redemption, the promise from the beginning was to *all* children of Abraham, Jews or Gentiles, who should be such, not by *lineal* descent, but by *resembling* him in *his faith*. I have in the appendix to my volume of Sermons, more largely considered some texts connected with this, and, I trust, not without throwing some light upon them. We may observe here the wondrous congruity, and omnipresent wisdom of the Divine counsels, displayed in the adaptation of the terms of this promise to the prevention of a claim of *exclusive* right to his favour. While he limits to the *natural* seed of Abraham, the privilege, and honour of being the chosen family, in whose *line* the Redeemer should come. He takes care to *record*, at the same time, an express declaration of the common interest of all mankind, in this Redeemer already promised to Adam the common parent of all. He says, that in Abraham's seed shall "*all the nations of the earth be blessed*."



would not have rendered inapplicable to it, the phrase "ministration of condemnation or death." For sacrificial atonement did not imply, that death would be *averted*, but that life would be *restored*. Hence no serious objection could be raised against the existence of atonement for moral transgression under the law; from its being termed the ministration of death.

St. Paul, in his *Epistle to the Hebrews*, does not dispute the existence of expiatory sacrifices for moral offence under the law; he only dwells upon their inferiority, and imperfection. He shews, that they were but figures, and could have no intrinsic value; that they required to be "often offered," whereas Christ made but one offering "once for all."

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### CHAPTER XIII.

*Mr. Davison's reasonings on what he terms the "progressive" character of God's dispensations.*

V. THE last argument of Mr. D.'s upon this part of the subject, which I proposed to consider, is that which is founded upon what he terms the *progressive* character of God's dispensations. The term is a very indefinite one. However, the sense, in which he uses it, is thus given together with the argument raised upon it. "For since the indulgence of a Legal Propitiation granted to moral offence under the law was so exceedingly limited; being restricted, as we see, to an inconsiderable number of specified instances of such offence, and those affecting the public rights of society in a definite manner; I would ask, is it a rational supposition to make, that any antecedent revelation had ordained a more ex-

tended service of expiatory sacrifice for moral transgression; that the character of mercy had been larger and more explicit, and then was contracted; and that God withdrew the best part of his revealed promises, and obscured the light, which he had once given to the faith of fallen man? I am not aware that there is any positive *affirmation* of Scripture, asserting that God's dispensation has always been *progressive*; but it cannot be denied that all the appearances of the history of revelation are in favour of that method; and that it is an hypothesis at once violent and ill-supported, to reverse, by any intrusive opinions of our own, the whole consistency of this apparent order. And this we must do, if we assign to the Antediluvian and Patriarchal Church the enjoyment of a more complete expiatory system, which the Church of Israel was condemned to lose; and so make the covenant of Canaan the *forfeiture* of a better, and more evangelical tenure. This is the reversed sequel of things, into which the history of the Divine economy must necessarily be cast, if it is to be adapted to the belief that an atoning expiatory religion was formerly granted to the first ages of the world\*."

I deny, and I trust have disproved, the fact which forms the very basis on which his argument professes to stand; namely, that "the indulgence of a legal propitiation granted to moral offence *under* the law was so exceedingly limited," &c. But for a moment conceding to him this point, I do not see that he could maintain his position by any solid reasoning. Indeed Mr. D. is sensible that his theory of the *progressive* nature of God's dispensations (at least in the sense in which he uses the term *progressive*) has no direct evidence of Scripture in its favour. He candidly admits he "is not aware that there is any positive *affirmation* of Scripture that

\* Davison on Sac. pp. 93, 94.



God's dispensation has always been *progressive*." "But," he adds, "*it cannot be denied* that all the appearances of revelation are in favour of that method," &c.

I cannot myself discover these "appearances of revelation," which he declares are so undeniably in favour of that method, and Mr. Davison has not thought it necessary to point out any particular instances. Indeed, when I compare the situation of the Jews with that of their forefathers, the appearances lead me to infer from them what I should have been pre-disposed to conjecture as most probable, viz., that the revelation of God would, if there were any difference, be more simple, and spiritual \* to these holy models of faith and piety, than to their stubborn and perverse posterity. But whatsoever may be the *appearances* of revelation, Mr. D. very justly observes, that there is *not* any

\* When we compare the Jews, at the time of their deliverance from captivity, with their illustrious forefathers; when we contrast the faith and piety of the latter with the fickleness and stubbornness of the former, surely we can look for no such progression in the Mosaic dispensation as Mr. Davison claims. We are rather reminded of our Lord's awful, but just declaration respecting the relative advantages of the Jews of his time, compared with those of his disciples; and can scarcely avoid referring it even to the contemporaries of Moses as compared with the holy believers of the Promise. "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have *more abundance*: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be *taken away, even that he hath*. Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand." Matt. xiii. 12, 13.

Thus also the Jews, at the giving of the law, had become sensual, and prone to idolatry. They were scarcely capable of "seeing" or "hearing" the more spiritual promises which sustained the faith of their fathers; consequently a law and ritual were *added*, which was calculated to act more immediately in their *senses*, and their *present hopes and fears*.

That the latter Jews enjoyed advantages which their *forefathers* did not; and that those of Christians surpassed them all, by no means favours the inference that God's dispensations were *always* progressive. The advantage of the Jew was over the Gentile, not over his forefathers the patriarchs and faithful men.



contact with idolatry, and depression in servitude had given them a fondness for external symbols, and had rendered them grovelling, scarcely capable of looking beyond the *present* motives of obedience. This spirit, and these its consequences were their burthen and their bondage. The antecedent charter of expiation was not withdrawn, but this was *added*. Under *both* the dispensations this charter of expiation was in force, and under *both* great, and holy men had revelations, more or less clear, respecting the great atonement, of which Sacrifice, under the Law, was the *Sacramental memorial*. Many had indistinct views of this great scheme of salvation, and fervently wished to witness its accomplishment. "Many prophets and righteous men," said Christ, "desired to see the things that ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear the things that ye hear, and have not heard them." The Redeemer's Sacrifice was retrospective, and was typified even in Abel's Sacrifice, as I shall presently endeavour to shew; but the promise of a Redeemer was not *by* the law, yet it was under the law, not being annulled by it. St. Paul merely sets forth Christ's Sacrifice as the *only* meritorious cause of reconciliation to God; he points out the imperfection of legal Sacrifice, and that the covenanted benefits annexed to Sacrifice faithfully offered, whether those benefits be temporal, or future, are from God's *favour*, which *favour* is annexed to Sacrifice, only in virtue of its typical

I cannot help remarking the grandeur and uniformity of counsel here exhibited by the Almighty. He shews in this how the most apparently defective instruments, and most intractable agents, are rendered mighty, and subservient to the accomplishment of his wondrous purposes. We are amazed at a few ignorant fishermen spreading the Gospel against the efforts of principalities and powers; can we be less so, when we behold an *oppressed* and *ignorant* people taken out of Egypt, then the *focus* of the *wisdom of this world*, led away from the towers of the proud cities of science, into a wilderness; and caused by a wondrous dispensation to preserve the knowledge of the true God, and the records of his promised salvation.

relation to Christ's Sacrifice. He concludes that, when this Sacrifice had been completed, it was manifestly absurd to trust any longer in the type, which was always intended to be abolished. But he nowhere denies the existence of atonement for moral transgression. The sin under the law is declared to be *forgiven*, but a fresh *offering* is required for *every* sin.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### *On Primeval and Patriarchal Faith.*

Mr. DAVISON (p. 151.) admits that "*one object of faith has always been the same*,—that object the Redeemer. The original promise in paradise, created this prospect of faith to be the light, and the hope of the world forever." I have claimed also the existence and recognition of one sacramental type, *shadowing* out the mode of this redemption, displaying its principal feature,—atonement by blood. Independently of the arguments urged from Lev. xvii. the *coeval existence* of Sacrifice, with the putting forth of that "one object of faith," affords a strong presumption of this fact. That "the original promise could not by itself be interpreted into the several parts of its appointed completion," is unquestionable. Neither do I pretend, to affirm to what extent the first worshippers were instructed in the mysteries of the redemption. I do not argue, that they were admitted to the knowledge of the incarnation of Christ, as the Son of God, and his being offered upon the *cross*. But from the fall the promise of a Redeemer was given; and Sacrifice pre-



figured, that *atonement should be made with blood*; and Sacrifice was instituted as a sacramental and typical rite, reconciling the offerer to God, when brought with faith in the *promised Redeemer*.

In page 122, Mr. Davison says, "If we follow the sense of Scripture, we shall now see how God, without having granted to these Patriarchs the *explicit revelation of an eternal heavenly state*, a revelation which is nowhere exhibited in the Pentateuch, trained them to the aim, and implicit persuasion of that eternal state by *large*, and *indefinite* promises, of being their God, and their great reward, 'promises to which the present life, as to *them*, furnished no adequate completion.'

Dr. Graves, in his Lectures on the Pentateuch\*, has many observations, which lead to an inference quite at variance with the hypothesis, that the Patriarchs "*had no explicit revelation of an eternal heavenly state*." The mention "*of the tree of life placed in the midst of the garden, whose efficacy was such, that if man was permitted to take of it, he would live for ever*," is alone a strong evidence. This, and many other arguments, Dr. Graves has urged with a strength of reasoning quite satisfactory to my mind, and to them I refer the reader. The case of Abel too, whose fate it is impossible to reconcile with the *acceptance* of his Sacrifice, and the effects which it must produce on the minds of his contemporaries, and posterity, unless the Sacrifice were connected with the promise of future rewards; is forcibly discussed by the same writer, and also by Law, in his reply to Warburton†.

Mr. Davison's theory, that "*they had only large and indefinite promises*," &c. in fact maintains, that the Patriarchal faith in a future life, had no definite *promise*, on which it might rest, but was a kind of *conjectural* faith. But not to mention the strong

\* Part iii. Lect. iv.

† See the Case of Abel, chap. xv.

reasonings against him, which may be found in the above cited authors, I would urge, that if God promised them a *Redeemer*, he must have referred to some *object*, in which *they were concerned*, and which was connected with the Redeemer's victory. The only such object, to which this promise could refer, was the effect of their having yielded to the insidious suggestions of the serpent. That effect was their *expulsion* from Paradise, the abode of *happiness and innocence*, and their being made subject to *death*. The promise, then, of bruising the serpent's head, given them, to *console* them after the Fall, was an intimation, that, by the SEED, this effect of transgression should be done away, and they should hereafter be *restored* to life and happiness. A type also was *instituted*, which (as I contend from Lev. xvii. 11. and other arguments already urged) both exhibited to them, in the agonies of the victim, the *consequences* of the Fall; and adumbrated that Sacrifice, and the nature of that "*suffering*," by which they should thereafter be redeemed from them. In no age was the religion of the world destitute of this *prominent and characteristic* feature; that *without blood is no remission*, and that *we are bought with a price*. But let us now cast a glance upon the view of this Patriarchal faith, as displayed in the xith chap. of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

I concur with Mr. Davison, that "those writers have done equal violence to the definition, the argument, and whole aim of the chapter, who could be satisfied with nothing less than restraining the objects of faith, on the one side or the other, to *things temporal*, as Grotius and Leclerc, or things of a *higher kind*, as some of their opponents" \*.

The Apostle (chap. x. 36. &c.) having exhorted them to guard against relinquishing their faith, tells them, that they have need of *patience*, but will ulti-

\* P. 120.



mately *secure* the *object* of their faith. To encourage them in perseverance he shews them that faith, being in its nature a confidence in *things hoped for*, and a firm persuasion *of things not seen*, requires patience. And he also enumerates to them a brilliant catalogue of eminent persons, beginning from the first ages of the world, whose faith had in various wonderful cases secured *the object of the particular promise*, on which it relied, notwithstanding the apparent obstacles, which seemed to oppose this accomplishment. It does not, indeed, follow that Christ was the *object* of faith in *all* the instances set forth in this chapter. Faith in any *particular* promise attained, *the thing promised*. But where the views and aspirations of faith are stated to be turned to an *heavenly country*, or where its result is said to be, that the person performing any act by faith, is declared "*righteous, or justified\**;" there, I contend, faith *must* rest upon the promise of a *Redeemer*,—Christ, directly, or indirectly, must be the *object of faith*.

That Samson and Gideon, and others wrought certain deliverances by faith in the promised aid of God, to accomplish these deliverances; that Rahab, believing in God's power, as manifested at the Red Sea, should save her life; that others should persevere through persecution from general belief in promises of *deliverance*; all this in no degree invalidates the conclusion, that those, whose faith was *directed to eternal life*, reposed upon a *greater* promise, the *promised Redeemer*.

That Abel, Abraham, and all those who looked for an "*heavenly country*," for a "*city not made with hands*," who confessed "*they were strangers, and pilgrims upon the earth*;" saw *clearly all the mys-*

\* Abraham (Rom. iv. 5.) is represented as justified by faith, by believing "on him that *justifieth the ungodly*." In *whom*, and in *what* must a faith be founded, which hopes for the *justification* of the *ungodly*? See also Micah vii. 19, 20. Acts iii. 25, 26.

*terious particulars of the scheme of the Redemption*, I am not prepared to contend:—but that they did believe in the *promise* of a Redeemer, and by faith in that promise, were *justified*, cannot I think be disproved so long as the New Testament is received as the word of God. Moses is expressly stated to have preferred the reproach of *Christ*\* to the pleasures and honours of Egypt. “Abraham rejoiced to see *Christ’s day*; and he saw it, and was glad.” The Gospel was *preached before* unto Abraham; and many prophets, and righteous men *desired* to see and hear the things which those in Christ’s day saw, and heard. These men then had *explicit revelations of an eternal heavenly state*; and something *more*, than a bare belief that *God is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*.

This belief, (Heb. xi. 6.) Mr. Davison has called “*memorable exposition of Enoch’s faith*,” and has said, that if it be not this memorable exposition, the introduction of it is unnecessary. “*It must*,” he says, “*be convicted of being an irrelevant, and inapplicable truth*.” As I deny his postulate, I shall not examine the reasonings he has built upon it. It is not an *exposition* of Enoch’s faith. Of Enoch *no act of faith* is recorded, as in the case of the other worthies. The Apostle, therefore, instead of pointing out the blessing obtained *by* his faith, *infers his faith from* his translation. His argument is, there

\* Mr. D. has said that there is “a confessed abstinence from all allusion” to atonement in this “Review of the primitive faith.” “For it is not only at the last, and when the long deduction of ancient faith is brought to a close, that the transition is made to *Jesus* the author, and finisher of our faith.” But it may be observed, that the “deduction” not only closes, but is *preceded* by directing them to *Christ* as the one object of faith, and the one completion of typical sacrifice. (see Heb. cap. viii. ix. and x.) And I may also remark that in this “close of the deduction, that the word *our* is not in the original, but it is “looking unto *Jesus* the *author*, and *finisher of the faith* ;” or the beginning and the end, (the first leader, and the perfecter ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτήν) of the faith.



is no particular *act of faith* recorded of Enoch, but we must presume his *faith to have been great*, on account of his distinguished reward. For *without faith it is impossible to please God*. For he that *cometh to God* (that is, first approaches God or enters his service,) must have *some faith*; he must "believe, that God is, and is a rewarder of them, that diligently seek him." A fortiori, Enoch, who had obtained the most distinguished mark of God's *favour*, must have had faith, and could not otherwise have received this blessing. This, which is the rudiments, the mere incipency of faith, by no means *limits* Enoch's faith to that definition, neither is it an *exposition* of his faith. The nature and objects of *his faith* are not recorded. But, as we know but *one meritorious cause* of salvation, *one promised* \* Redeemer; it appears a large requisition upon this text, to draw from it an authority to exclude this *Redeemer from Enoch's faith*.

\* "Which words," says Law, speaking of the text in question, "contain neither more nor less than if it had been said, *He that cometh to God must believe, that he is a fulfiller of his promises to all those, that truly believe in him, and them*. For God cannot be considered as a rewarder of mankind in any other sense, than as he is a fulfiller of his promises made to mankind in the covenant of the Messiah. For God could not give nor man receive any rewards or blessings, but in and through one Mediator, Christ Jesus." Law's Confutation of Warburton, &c. p. 52.

"Fides, nititur testimonio revelantis, mandantis, et promittentis," says Heidegger, Hist. Pat. Exercit. vol. i. Exercit. iii. Faith must repose upon some promise, and it is the scope of the Apostle to shew, that faith *so reposing* is never ultimately disappointed in its expectation of the *promised blessing*, of whatsoever kind, which is its *object*. But *eternal life* was the blessing obtained by Enoch, and therefore eternal life was the *object* of his faith. But as regards the promise of eternal life there is but one ground of faith, the PROMISED SEED.

## CHAPTER XV.

*References to Abel's sacrifice in Heb. xi. and xii.*

IN Gen. iv. this event is incidentally mentioned, and the brief narrative simply states, that God "had respect unto Abel's offering." The Apostle has supplied, by the authority of the same Spirit, who instructed Moses, those parts of the case, which were not necessary to the former history, but were now requisite for the edification of his converts. He declares the disposition, which led Abel to offer, and inclined God to accept the sacrifice, and also describes the immediate consequence of its acceptance.

Mr. Davison, (if I correctly interpret him, and I subjoin his own statements, copying accurately his typography \*) maintains that the ostensible cause of the *acceptance* of Abel's sacrifice was his "*personal*

\* "By which," (Sacrifice,) "he obtained witness, *he was righteous*, God 'testifying of his gifts,' *εμαρτυρηθη ειναι δικαιος.*" "In like manner the rest of Scripture speaks to Abel's *personal righteousness*. Thus in St. John's distinction between Cain and Abel; "Wherefore slew he him? because his own *works were evil*, and his *brother's righteous*."—Thus in the *remonstrance* of God with Cain. "That *remonstrance* with Cain's envy for the acceptance of Abel's offering, is directed, not to the *mode* of their *Sacrifice*, but to the *good* and *evil* doings of their respective lives." "If thou *doest well*, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou *doest evil*, sin lieth at the door." Thus also our Saviour directs us to "the blood of the *righteous* Abel." All these collateral illustrations confirm the obvious sense of the text of St. Paul. He affirms that Abel, by the acceptance of his Sacrifice, gained the testimony of God, that he was a *righteous man*. He affirms, therefore, that it was his *personal* habit of righteousness, to which God vouchsafed the testimony of his approbation, by that acceptance of his offering. The antecedent faith in God which produced that habit of a religious life, commended his Sacrifice; and the *divine testimony* was not to the *specific form* of his oblations, but to his *actual righteousness*." Davison on Sacrifice, p. 127.



*righteousness.*" It is true that he qualifies this by saying that the antecedent faith in God, which produced "that habit of a religious life, commended his sacrifice," &c. But then Mr. D. has adopted, as a *full definition* of primeval faith, the text (Heb. xi. 6,) that a belief that God *is*, and is a *rewarder* of them, that *diligently seek him*. Therefore he *excludes entirely* from the *direct*, or *indirect* cause of Abel's acceptance, a faith in a REDEEMER, and a SACRIFICE, as the only meritorious cause of man's acceptance:—and holds that God both accepted him solely from his PERSONAL RIGHTEOUSNESS; and thus sanctioned a faith, that this personal righteousness, or in other words, that man's DILIGENTLY SEEKING GOD was the *sole* and *meritorious cause* of acceptance, without reference to a *price given for his ransom*, or *blood shed for his pardon*. I know not how Mr. D. reconciles this system, with the general doctrine of St. Paul upon the *object* of *that faith*, by which man's pardon is procured, and particularly with that awful representation contained in his epistle to the Romans, of the utter inadequacy of man's "*personal righteousness*," to effect that stupendous work, the reconciliation of man to his offended and holy God; but to me it appears at direct variance with the plain, and fundamental truths laid down by the Apostle. I can see no alternative, but the abandonment of the one, or the other. For Mr. D. seems to claim a period *subsequent* to the Fall, when man was taught, that he needed no Redeemer, but wrought out his acceptance with God by his own "*personal righteousness* \*.

My views of the subject lead me to reverse this proposition. Instead of holding, that the *sacrifice* was

\* "There is none other name" (saith St. Paul,) "under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12. Were the *faithful* men of old, taught a different doctrine? Was this "name" not given to them—were they to believe—was it their *faith*—that they or their offerings were accepted through their "*personal righteousness*."

accepted on account of Abel's *personal righteousness*; I understand that Abel's *imperfect goodness* was accepted, through faith in the promises connected with the Sacrifice; that the *sacramental and typical Sacrifice* being offered by faith; not only the *object* of his faith was granted, but a *visible* token of its being granted was vouchsafed. God himself testified "upon (ἐπὶ) his gifts" that he was JUSTIFIED.

Let us examine the passage, and see what confirmation it affords to my views of its sense.

The Apostle, as I have already observed, describes various *acts* or *manifestations* of faith; and shews, to the encouragement of his converts, that these acts of faith invariably secured the *object* of the particular promise, to which they respectively aspired. Abel's *act* of faith was the *offering of an animal sacrifice*, and, therefore, I contend, according to the *scope* of the apostle's argument, the *object* of Abel's faith was some promise *annexed* to sacrifice; which promise the apostle wanted to shew was fulfilled to him. What, then, was the only fulfilment we can here find? Why that Abel was JUSTIFIED. This conclusion is supported by not only the *scope* of the argument, and the scriptural doctrine respecting *man's righteousness*; but also by the just and legitimate sense of δίκαιος \* as generally used in the

\* See Parkhurst upon this word. How our works are called righteous in the Gospel is well known, and the *difference* between δίκαιος, as applied to Abel's works and to Abel himself is obvious. Mr. Davison cannot build any thing upon these phrases; neither do I consider the "*remonstrance*," which Mr. Davison urges, as having any weight against the powerful testimony adduced in favour of the meaning of this text. As I have declined entering upon the controversy between him and the Archbishop of Dublin on that text, I shall not offer any solution of the supposed difficulty contained in it. I shall only at present regard it as a difficult text, on which nothing can be built, and from which nothing can be maintained to shake the *mass* of evidence supporting the conclusion, that Abel's Sacrifice was a sacramental memorial of the Sacrifice of a Redeemer. Without, however, entering into any discussion of this particular text, I transcribe the following interpretation of it by a



New Testament. The text is "By faith Abel offered a *more excellent* sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testi-

late very learned divine given in a manuscript note written in a copy of Kennicott's two dissertations.

"The word *זבח* is sometimes used to signify a sin-offering. But in this place I should rather choose to adhere to the old interpretation. Abel was preferred; Cain is angry; and God expostulates. Why art thou angry? If thou dost well thou shalt be accepted; if not, sin lieth at the door, that is, thou hast made no atonement, thou hast expressed no faith in a Redeemer, who should deliver thee from the power and punishment of thy sin, and therefore it still remains to be accounted for by thee. The following words confirm this interpretation. *Vid. Int. Bib. ad Loc.*"

The following is the passage of the interleaved Bible referred to:

"The whole transaction (namely of Cain and Abel) may be thus with greater clearness and propriety represented.

"We have reason to imagine that after the Fall, Adam had intimation given of a Messiah, and was bid to trust in him. Of this Messiah Sacrifices were to be the types. No other satisfactory account can be given of their institution. For no reason can be assigned why the death of an innocent animal should universally be deemed a means of averting the anger, or procuring the pardon of an offended God. The sacrificing, therefore, an animal was performing an act of faith in him, and so the Apostle accounts it in his mention of this transaction, Heb. ii. 2. This act of faith, therefore, Abel performed, and received some token that he had rendered his God propitious to him. This act of faith Cain did not perform; he shed no blood, without which there is no propitiation; he only brought of the fruit of the ground. He therefore received not the token accorded unto Abel. Upon this he is angry, and God with the greatest propriety pronounces his conduct absurd, and may be thus supposed to address him. 'Why art thou grieved and angry at not procuring the end without the means. I have proposed two ways to your choice of preserving my favour; the one by a life of uninterrupted merit, the other by a reliance on a future Messiah for a propitiation for your deficiencies. To those who should depend upon the last, I have commanded to offer a bloody sacrifice. Any acknowledgment is sufficient to those who shall choose the former. Upon this, then, thou hast chosen to rely, and if thou dost well thou shalt be accepted and rewarded. If thou dost not well, sin lieth at the door, is accountable for by thus seeing thou hast made no propitiation. Subject unto thee is thy desire, thou mayest choose which method thou pleasest; it is left wholly to thy determination.' What Shuckford says of the *ו* being to be rendered by *him* only and not by *it* is not worth notice."

fyng of (upon *ἐπὶ*) his gifts." In what was the superiority of Abel's sacrifice manifested? was it not that *through* it he obtained witness that he was *justified*? God visibly testified upon the sacrifice the *justification* of the offerer, *because* it was brought by faith, in that promised scheme of redemption of which it was a *sacramental memorial*, and in those mercies, which, in *virtue* of its typical relation to that scheme, were annexed to it. Understand God thus pleased to testify Abel's justification; then the coherency of this text with St. Paul's general declarations, and with the principal outlines of God's appointed, and pre-ordained scheme of salvation is easily discernible; but understand it to be an announcement, that Abel's, or any man's, *personal righteousness*, is set forth as the *procuring cause* of God's acceptance of his services; then the apostle is set at variance with himself; an unexpected and unaccountable disruption is effected in that chain of connection, which we believed to have existed between the fall of the first, and the victory of the last Adam; and a strange and portentous chasm is created in the unity of the Divine counsels upon this momentous subject; separating the primeval worshippers from the common lot of mankind; exempting them from the presumed universal effects of the fall; and dividing them from the common bond of church union; the interest of all men in the great atonement, the legitimate hope of salvation only *through the merits of a Redeemer*.

In Mr. Davison's interpretation what sense can be attached to the next member of the text. "And by (or through) it (*nempe θυσίας* \*) *he yet speaketh*."

\* This reference of *αὐτῆς* to *θυσίας*, understood, bears heavily upon Mr. Davison's specious remarks upon another text (Heb. xii. 24) which I shall presently discuss. But he cannot deny me this reference, as he has himself expressly claimed it to *ἡς* in a former member of this very text.

If we interpret the words, "*by it he being dead, yet speaketh*;"



He *YET* speaketh it through his sacrifice. Can it be said that his example teaches the world, that the *sacrifice of Christ* will be accepted through our *personal righteousness*? No; but that our *imperfect righteousness* will be accepted *through faith in our sacrifice*, as Abel's was *through faith in his*; and that thus only we shall be *justified*.

Again; how would this history suit the purpose,

that Abel, though dead, still (by this Sacrifice, and the manifest token he received upon it, that he was justified) speaketh to all generations, and declareth, that as God accepted his Sacrifice, and thus gave proof of his justification from having offered it by faith, as a sacramental memorial of the *promised* redemption; we have then a sense of the passage, not only simple, and obviously accordant with its grammatical construction; but also consistent with the grand doctrine of universal salvation through faith in Christ; which St. Paul so prominently, and energetically sets forth, not only in this epistle, but also in every portion of his writings. But refer the words back to the Book of Genesis, and suppose them to allude to the blood of *Abel crying for vengeance*, you then thrust in a subject altogether foreign to the scope of the argument: the sentence is harshly disjoined from the preceding ones: and the structure of the text is violated without any apparent necessity. The subjoined halting, incongruous, and uncritical commentary of Grotius, indicates that this interpretation is beset with difficulties, compelling him to cut the knot, which he cannot untie.

"Manuscriptus *ετι λαλει*. Nempe in Genesi. Ob fidem mortuus adhuc ibi loquitur, id est sanguis ejus ad Deum clamat. Gen. iv. 10. Est enim hic presens pro præterito, quod ita vivide ostenditur quasi præsens sit. Cædes Abelis a Deo vindictam exegit. Legendum, ut dixi, ostendit id quod infra est xii. 24. *αιματι παντισμου κρειττον λαλουντι παρα τον Αβελ*. ubi idem locus Geneseos respicitur. *δι αυτης* hic valetidem quod *δι αυτην*. vide quæ diximus supra. §. 2. Sensus vulgaris Geneseos apertus est; at sensus mysticus pios *post mortem vivere quia et loquuntur*. Grot. Heb. xi. 4."

As I have observed, I shall presently have occasion to examine the supposed reference of Heb. xii. 24, and shall now content myself with just requesting the attention of the theological reader to the gratuitous assumptions in this exposition; to the affirmation that *λαλει* "est præsens pro præterito," in defiance of the force of *ετι*, clearly denoting, that the example set forth in the Sacrifice, and faith of Abel, was intended as an encouragement even for all generations; and to the claim of a *vulgar* and *mystical* sense; the latter finally containing the impotency of conclusion expressed in the last sentence quoted.

which the Apostle had in view, (viz. to shew that faith would ultimately receive the promised blessing to which it aspired) unless we admit that the object of that faith was justification by this sacrifice. For if his faith had in view any *other* object, instead of illustrating the position by which St. Paul encourages his converts to patience and perseverance, he presents an example directly opposed to it. For, if his faith looked to *any thing* but *justification* in this act, instead of attaining its *object*, he was completely deceived and baffled. God's *acceptance* of this act of faith would naturally lead to the conclusion, that the *object* of his faith was to be *granted*. But instead of this, he is *immediately murdered*. This point has been powerfully argued by Dr. Graves, and also by William Law, as a proof of the Patriarchal and primeval knowledge of a future state, and it applies no less to our present purpose. The animated and fervent language of the latter I subjoin, and with it close my remarks on this text.

“For immediately after a Covenant of Redemption made with all mankind the *First good man* after it in the very beginning of the world, and the *beginning* of his own life, after his *first act* \* of Divine worship, and as soon as God had declared his *good pleasure* in it, this first good man was slaughtered like a beast, and his blood poured out upon the earth.

“Now can there possibly be a fuller demonstration, that the Covenant of Redemption made by God with man was for a life, and immortality in *another* or *future* state? Otherwise, it must follow, that the first good man in the world lost all the benefit of God's covenant, merely *because* he was *good*; that he lost all the life he had to lose, and all that

\* It does not appear, that it was the *first act*. I do not subscribe to all these particulars, but adduce the quotation merely as an animated specimen of the general bearing of the argument.



was dear and precious both to body and soul, *merely* through the *devotion* that he shewed towards God, and the *favour* which God shewed towards him.

“ Therefore either Abel’s blood cries aloud the *absolute certainty* of a future state, or Abel must be said to have been *undone, ruined*, and utterly deprived of all that was, or could be, *any good* to him, purely because of a friendship *discovered* between God and him.

“ This fact, therefore, recorded by the Spirit of God, through *Moses* tells, and assures all the Mosaic generations in the strongest manner, that *another* life, and *another* world belonged to Abel, besides that which Abel lost by his death. Does it not as directly and openly declare this to them, as when Christ said his *kingdom was not of this world* ? Does it not say the same thing to them as when Christ said to his disciples, *fear not them that can only kill the body* ? the same thing as the voice from heaven which cried, *blessed are the dead which die in the Lord* \*.”

There is yet one more text (Heb. xii. 24.) to be considered. “ *And to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than Abel’s blood.*”

The plain and obvious meaning of which appears to be, that Abel’s blood, or the blood of Abel’s *Sacrifice* is compared with the blood of Christ’s *Sacrifice*. But the blood of Christ’s Sacrifice, by the term “ sprinkling ” applied to it, is spoken of as making *atonement* for sin, consequently the blood of Abel’s Sacrifice is spoken of in its relation to the same effect of Sacrifice. And the Apostle argues, that though the blood of Abel’s Sacrifice spoke or declared mercies, the blood of Christ speaketh still better. The one spoke of remission obtained only to the *offerer* through the figurative, imperfect, and often *repeated* Sacrifices ; but Christ’s declared *universal*

\* Law, Confutation of Warburton, p. 46.

pardon through the one great and perfect Sacrifice made *once for all*\*.

Mr. Davison has attempted to invalidate this by some criticisms on the passage; in which, to my apprehension, he has exhibited as complete a failure, as is to be found in any one part of his book.

He observes that there is another reading of το for τον. But the latter being that of the received text, and admitted by him as the best supported, we may discuss the passage in question on this ground. The text runs thus: "Και διαθηκης νεας μεσιτη Ιησου, και αιματι ραντισμου, κρειττονα λαλουντι παρα τον Αβελ.

"The natural, the necessary sense of the received text is, he observes, that 'the blood of Christ speaketh better things than Abel *speaketh*.' In which view, since the allusion is so pregnant, and the reference so apt to the words of God in the book of Genesis; that 'the voice of thy brother's blood *crieth* unto me from the ground;' since also the opposition of *contrast* becomes so striking between the blood of Abel, the first shed blood of the human race, *crying* to God for *justice*, and the blood of the Redeemer *speaking mercy*; we shall at once throw away the connection of the images, with the mutual relation of the Scripture text containing them, and destroy the exuberance of the Apostle's comparison, if we set aside these ideas of Abel's blood, and go to that of his oblations. And it is to be observed that the Apostle's remarkable phrase 'of the blood of the Mediator *speaking* better things,' not *accomplishing* or *obtaining* them, carries us almost irresistibly to the *voice* of Abel's blood. We scarcely have an option whether to remember it, or no. Now the book of Genesis tells us that Abel's blood spoke, and what it spoke; but that book does not tell what the blood of his offerings spoke; whether it was expiation or not. Consequently the most safe, the most direct, and the most

\* Comp. viii. and ix. chapters.



complete application of the Apostle's words will be to make a comparison between the blood of Abel shed, and that of the Redeemer. And the sentiment resulting from the contrast, thus understood, is most worthy of the whole context. I confess that I could as soon forget *the recorded cry of Abel's blood*, in the great opposition of the things which create the whole comparison here made, as I could 'the *voice* of the trumpet which spoke on Mount Sinai,' which is another point of the parallel. The entire parallel consists more of *opposites*, than of *things corresponding*. The known *vindictive* cry therefore of Abel's blood, is more in unison with the intent of the comparison, than the supposed *expiatory* sense of his Sacrifice \*.

I begin with denying, and I trust disproving the proposition with which Mr. Davison sets out.

The blood of Christ speaketh better things than Abel *speaketh* is not the "natural," and much less the "*necessary*" sense of the received text. Either Mr. Davison has overlooked, or has deemed unworthy of his notice, the very reasonable interpretation of this passage given by Richie †, and alluded to by Newcome and others, by simply supplying *ραντισμον*, which is obviously understood after *τον*. The blood of sprinkling is evidently a *Sacrificial* phrase ‡, and the sense of the passage is, that the sprinkling of § the blood of Christ's Sacrifice speaketh, or proclaimeth *better* things, than the sprinkling of Abel's Sacrifice. It is to *heighten* the excellence of Christ's Sacrifice, that the comparison is made; it is not to

\* Davison on Sac. p. 74.

† Pec. Doct. 138.

‡ It is also a Hebraism.

§ Christ's blood, indeed, was not actually *sprinkled*, neither perhaps was that of Abel's Sacrifice; but the Apostle obviously uses the figure in reference to the parallel, upon which he has so eloquently expatiated in this Epistle, between the purifying effects of the sprinkling of the blood of the Legal Sacrifices, and the similar but transcendent and purifying effects of his blood.

contrast the effect of the blood of Christ's Sacrifice speaking mercy, with that of Abel's *murder* crying for vengeance, but to shew the superiority of the *antitype* over its *type*,—that though Abel's Sacrifice spoke good things, that of Christ spoke *better* things. Mr. Davison indeed says, "the book of Genesis tells us, that *Abel's* blood spoke, and what it spoke, but that book does not tell what the blood of his *offerings* spoke." But, if the *book of Genesis* does not tell us what the blood of Abel's *offerings* spoke, the *Apostle himself* does tell us. And I see no occasion, to travel back to Genesis for an explanation of this, when a plain, and decisive one is given in the notice of this very Sacrifice, in the *preceding chapter*; καὶ δι' αὐτῆς (θυσίας) ἀποθανὼν ἐτι λαλεῖ, "AND BY IT (namely his Sacrifice) HE, BEING DEAD, YET SPEAKETH." If it be asked what it spoke, I answer, the mercy of God, in having given Sacrificial atonement, the Sacramental memorial of the Redeemer, which, though *imperfect*, to be *often* offered, procuring the pardon *only of the offerer*, and *obscurely* shadowing out the great scheme of salvation, yet, when offered by faith, should be accepted *till the fulness of time should come*. This spoke *good things*; but the Sacrifice *once offered*, which opened the mercy seat to *all* believers, and brought to *light* life and immortality spoke *better things*.

What Mr. Davison has said respecting his not forgetting "*the recorded cry of Abel's blood*," &c. however eloquently stated, and however imposing, is, I must be free to say, mere declamation. It cannot bear the touch of criticism. He has overlooked one little, but not unimportant circumstance; namely, that the passage in question, instead of being in the *same* member of the parallel with the terrible "*voice of the trumpet*," &c. happens to be in *that* member of the parallel, which is *OPPOSED TO IT*. On one side terrors, on the other mercies. On the one side the *earthly* Sion, the proclamation of threats



and terrors. On the other side the *heavenly* Sion, and the declarations of mercy, the blood of Christ's Sacrifice, speaking *better* things than even that of Abel's Sacrifice, of which God had manifested his acceptance.

"The blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Any attentive, nay, I think any, even hasty reader must see, that the sense of the latter clause of this sentence is determinable, not by the general *opposition* mentioned by Mr. Davison, but by the *comparison* drawn between it and the preceding clause. The sprinkling of Christ's blood speaketh *better* things than the sprinkling of Abel's blood. Abel's Sacrifice speaks in *one* degree good things, but Christ's in a *greater* degree. The comparison evidently supposes *similarity*, not *opposition*; it is not the opposition of things totally different, but the comparison of inferior, and superior.

Now there could be no such resemblance between Abel's blood shed in strife, and crying for vengeance, and the sprinkling of Christ's blood for the purpose of expiation. But if we see, in Abel's Sacrifice, the *typical* and *imperfect* offering, and in Christ's the *antitype* and *perfect* Sacrifice, then the *resemblance* is obvious; and we perceive that the object of the Apostle, to set forth the *transcendant* excellence of the latter, is answered by comparing it with the *great*, but inferior revelations of mercy attached to the former.

Mr. Davison has indeed many authorities on his side, and he even proceeds so far as to treat the opposite notion as something singular. "I observe," he says, "in Wolfius that he quotes it as a singular and peculiar notion advanced by a foreign critic, Snabelius. 'Atque is quidem *hoc habet singulare*, quod per sanguinem non illum Abelis a Caino fustum, sed agni ab Abele mactati, intelligit.'"

I cannot say that the astonishment of Wolfius, nor

even the general suffrage of authorities, upon this point, has much weight with me; but as it appears to possess some with Mr. Davison, I beg to submit to him, as a counterpoise, the following luminous and conclusive criticism from Poole's Synopsis:—

“ Si legas *τον*, referri possit ad *παντισμον* ut *Abel* sit casus genitivi. Sic veritas, quam illa aspersio *Abelis*, i. e. aspersio sanguinis in primo illo Sacrificio *Abelis*, Gen. iv. 4. Et sensus erit, Sacrificium Christi *longe efficacius est, ad gratiam Dei nobis conciliandam*, quam Sacrificium animalium *Abelis*, et proinde quam omnia veteris Testamenti Sacrificia juxta Heb. ix. 13, &c. Sacrificium autem *Abelis* hic nominat tanquam primum omnium in Scriptura memoratorum, quod etiam Deus testatus est sibi gratissimum fuisse præ illo Caini. Hanc sententiam astruit et *scopus* loci; Apostolus enim totus fere in hoc laborat, ut ostendat impotentiam Fœderis Legalis ad acquirendam vitam æternam, et quantum eo præstat Fœdus Evangelicum, ut liquet ex cap. ix. et x. Cum hoc autem scopo minime congruit altera interpretatio quæ etiam *αρωτος* videtur; quia comparata esse oportet secundum magis, et minus *ejusdem speciei et naturæ*; et proinde quod melius est, melius est aliquo quod bonum est, ut ait Chrysostomus. At sanguis *Abelis* propius non fuit omnino bonus ad id, quod valebat Sanguis Christi: (quia pro vindicta clamabat.)”

With this criticism I respectfully submit the passage to Mr. Davison's reconsideration, and now close my remarks upon the subject.

I am not aware of having overlooked any argument of importance, or shrunk from fairly grappling with any difficulty, suggested by him. Some of my views are *original*, and perhaps *new*. It is not impossible, that I may have laid myself open, in some cases, to be refuted. If so, he will not, should he consider me worth notice, fail to perceive, and take



advantage of these. But I feel confident in the general strength of the evidences adduced, and I trust that it will be borne in mind, that the loss of one or two outposts does not necessarily compromise the safety of the citadel.

With respect to Mr. Davison's talents, and theological acquirements, I can speak in no other terms than those of the greatest respect. His work on Prophecy alone invests him with a literary, and theological reputation of no ordinary stamp. This work is calculated to excite a free, but sober and reverent spirit of enquiry. I am not *his* opponent, but I am the decided opponent of his work on Primitive Sacrifice. I look upon it with regret. I am concerned to see the powers of his mind concentrated, not only on what I deem a paradox, but on a point, which appears to me to have no tendency to any valuable result. The *general* faith of Christians appears to have adopted the article of the divine institution, and originally expiatory purport of Sacrifice. If an error, it would not have been one of importance, nor would its exposure have led to any material consequences \*. But, if not an error (and such I believe to be the case) then the evil of an attempt to subvert that belief is proportionate to the acuteness, and polemical skill of him, who makes the attempt. In these Mr. Davison, if report speak true, is no mean proficient; and his name, and talents will have served to give currency, and importance to an error, which, when advocated only by Mr. Bel-

\* After all Mr. Davison's elaborate arguments in favour of the human institution, every reader of his book must (notwithstanding the qualifications with which he follows it up,) be forcibly struck with this remarkable announcement.

"*I do not press a peremptory decision against the Divine origin.*"

Surely on the perusal of this passage the recollection of the tenor of every part of his book, and of the earnestness and subtlety, with which he has endeavoured to weaken, nay to destroy, the supposed evidence of this *divine origin*; cannot fail to give rise to one question, upon them, viz. CUI BONO?

sham, and his coadjutors, peacefully reposed in oblivion and insignificance. These talents however, will not, I trust, be able to beat down this generally received doctrine, that, from the beginning God revealed, however obscurely, the principal feature in his dispensation of mercy—that, as man's life was *forfeited*, and could not be redeemed by his *own righteousness* \*, God himself “*provided a Lamb*”—gave to his fallen creatures the *sacramental memorial* as the symbol of the sacrifice of Christ—the gracious, but perhaps obscure intimation of his mysterious designs—that all mankind should be redeemed, “*with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times*†.”

\* “What are these,” said the elder in the Revelations, “which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they?”

The answer is, “These are they which came out of *great tribulation*, and have washed their robes, and *made them white in the blood of the Lamb*?” Is Abel, and are all those heroic, and faithful servants of God not to be numbered among those with *white robes*? and can they have made their *robes white*, or in other words have been accounted righteous otherwise than by faith in the *blood of the Lamb*.

† 1 Pet. i. 19, 20.





## APPENDIX I.

I HAVE observed, that my views upon the subject of legal atonement have involved me in a difference of opinion with the learned Archbishop of Dublin. This difference, though it does not materially affect, but rather strengthens the principal conclusion which he endeavours to maintain, I cannot declare, without entering into an examination of the points on which we are at issue. It is a respect due to a writer of his authority, and necessary to the reception of my own opinion, that I should submit to the public my reasons for dissenting from him.

In the Appendix to his Sermons on the Atonement, No. xxxviii., he is replying to several Socinian arguments against the *Vicarious Import of Sacrifice*, and amongst others is this, supported by Sykes and Taylor. "The sacrifice could not have implied any thing Vicarious, as no atonement could be made where life was forfeited." To this Dr. Magee replies, "There is no argument advanced by the opponents of the doctrine of atonement, with greater confidence than this; and there is none which abounds with greater fallacies. It is untrue, in point of fact; it is sophistical, in point of reasoning: and it is impertinent, in point of application."

"I. It is untrue; for atonements *were* made in cases where, *without atonement*, life was forfeited. This appears at once, from the passage of Leviticus last referred to\*, which positively asserts the atonement to be made for the *life* of the offerer; it also appears from the unbending rigour of the law in general, which seems to have denounced death against every violation of it, (see Deut. xxvii. 26; Ezek. xviii. 19—23; Gal. iii. 10; James ii. 10,) and in particular, from the specific cases of *perjury*, (Levit. vi. 3.) and of *profane swearing*, (v. 4.) for which atonements were appointed, notwithstanding the strict sentence of the law was death (Exod. xx. 7. and Levit. xxiv. 16.) See on this *Grot. de Satisf. cap. x. § 3.*

\* Lev. xvii. 11.



*Hallett's Notes and Disc.* p. 275—278; and *Richie's Peculiar Doctrine*, vol. i. p. 245—249, 280. This latter writer, it is to be observed, though opposing the doctrine of vicarious suffering, and wishing to avail himself of the objection here urged, yet finds himself not at liberty to advance farther than to state, that it *seldom happened* that death was denounced against any offences for which atonement was appointed\*."

That "it is untrue," I perfectly agree with this learned writer, but think that he has not pointed out the real sense in which it is untrue. The fact is, that atonement for sin was *never* made, but in cases in which *life was forfeited*: that is, forfeited by the *original* sentence against man's *disobedience*. But atonement did *not avert* this forfeiture; the forfeiture invariably took place, and atonement *redeemed* man from its effects after the forfeiture had taken place. The archbishop, I submit, has not taken a correct view of the application, when he imagines, that sacrificial atonement usually availed to avert the infliction of death, in the case of *any* crime for which it was *appointed to be inflicted by the hand of man*; or for which it was *specially appointed* to be inflicted even by the hand of God, *for the sake of public example*. The general declaration of Leviticus xvii. 11. I consider to have *principally* a reference to the charter of atonement *before* the law, and to have implied the future *restoration* of life. If its reference to atonement peculiarly *by* the law be admitted, as I think it may, it denotes, not the means of averting any special punishment to be inflicted by man, but no more than the *general* consequence of being *reconciled* to God, and thus being permitted to enjoy long life, and to escape the *premature* infliction of death, to which they would be liable should they *persist* in *despising* the appointed means of being re-admitted to his favour and service. But this amounts to nothing like the appointment of atonement to avert the death denounced *by the law*, as a *special* punishment for any *particular* offence. *Every* transgression, of which the offender persisted in refusing to acknowledge the guilt, and seek the pardon, by God's established means, became *presumptuous* sin, and rendered the offender liable to death, *not because* there was *no atonement appointed for that transgression*, but because he *contemptuously neglected* the atonement. Therefore, though atonement may be said, in a general sense, to be for the life of the *Jews*, yet, in the case I have just stated, the offender does *not suffer death* for any

\* Magee on Atonement, Appendix, No. xxxviii.

*particular transgression*, because *no atonement is appointed*, but for his total contempt of God in *despising the appointed atonement*: and I think it would be difficult to point out a single case in which (supposing "life forfeited" to mean, that by the law death was the *specially denounced punishment of any particular offence*) atonement was made where life was *thus* forfeited, and in which atonement averted *that* death. The cases adduced by the learned archbishop by no means prove this. The general cases, Deut. xxvii. 26\*, Ezek. xviii. 19—23, Gal. iii. 10, and James ii. 10, refer to that sentence to which the law subjected *every man*, and which atonement did not avert, but from which (in virtue of its sacramental relation, and as the primeval charter,—the charter, not of the law but *under the law*) it was the symbol of future *redemption*. The law *itself* invested it with no other additional character than that of an appointed means of admission to the *temporal* privileges of God's favour, denoted by the visible sign—*re-admission* to his service; and as such the law did not attribute to it the power of averting that *universal* sentence, which is the death pointed to in those passages. Neither has the Archbishop been able to establish his theory by the "specific cases of *perjury* (Levit. vi. 3.) and of *prophane swearing* (v. 4.) for which atonements were appointed, notwithstanding the strict sentence of the law was death, (Exod. xx. 7. and Levit. xxiv. 16.)"

It may be observed in the outset, that there is but *one* of these cases (the last) to which the penalty of death (perhaps, *even by the hand of God*†, but *certainly by the hand of man*) is decreed. The *two first*, unquestionably, bear no affinity with this last; and whether the *third* does, is to my mind more than doubtful. Perjury, rash oaths, and even irreverent mention of God's name, do not appear to have been offences, to which the punishment of *signal* and *premature* death was decreed. But the case of Levit. xxiv. 16 is a case of *presumptuous* sin of the worst description,—not only *morally* wicked, but (as being a contemptuous rejection and blasphemous defiance of God's authority,) also an act tending directly to the *subversion of the Jewish polity*, and consequently obnoxious to that penalty, which was inflicted for *example*, to deter others from apostacy. The son of an Israelitish woman, by an Egyptian, quarrels with an Israelite, and, to taunt him, *curses and blasphemes* his God. All the

\* The "curse of the law was not the denunciation of death upon sin; but the declaration of sin upon which death had been originally denounced from the first instance of transgression."

† I mean, *signal* and *premature* death.



other cases relate, not to open and deliberate apostasy, and defiance such as this, but to the *rash* and irreverent mention of God's name, and to a man's being tempted to commit perjury. For these, I believe, the law did not *specially* inflict death; though, being sinful in the sight of God, an atonement must be made; and, if not made, the offender would be in danger of premature death from the hand of God: but then *this* death was not the punishment *specially* decreed to the offence of *perjury*, &c. merely as such, but to its assuming the character of *presumptuous* sin, in consequence of the offender's *impenitence* and *contempt* of the *appointed means* of pardon. In this respect it only partook of the nature of every other sin against God, and did not incur death in reference to any *specially* denounced sentence.

With respect to the *affinity* between Exod. xx. 7, and Levit. xxiv. 16. Dr. Richie has entered more at large into the arguments by which Dr. Magee's view of them appears to be supported. I shall offer a few remarks upon them.

"In the general," he says, "they were told, *the Lord would not hold them guiltless*, (Exod. xx. 7;) and in particular it was enacted, that they should be *stoned to death*," (Levit. xxiv. 16.) Richie, Pec. Doct. 246.

Nothing can be more gratuitous than this distinction of "*general and particular*;" for, if we admit that the offence in both cases were the same, the true statement of it then would be, that in the former was designated the consequence of the offence *with respect to God*, "*the Lord will not hold him guiltless*;"—in the latter the punishment decreed to be *inflicted by man*, they shall be *stoned to death*. The former would denote the *moral guilt* of the crime; the latter, the penalty to which it was liable as against the *polity of the Jews*. But sacrificial atonement, I contend, referred *solely to the former*. The *law*, therefore, appointed no atonement where *signal* death was decreed to be inflicted, because the *law itself* attributed to sacrificial atonement no other privileges than *restoration to the temporal*\* benefits and *visible symbols* of

\* Some perplexity seems to have been created in the subject by these two circumstances,—by the intermixture of the civil and religious polity of the Jews, both administered under a special providence; and by the temporal nature of the Mosaic sanctions. God's favour and displeasure are respectively offered and denounced for the maintenance of this polity. But then the offence which incurs punishment, as against the *institutions* of this polity, does not lose that *distinct character* which belongs to it as an act of *moral depravity*, or of *disobedience* against God. With this part of it the punishment of it, whether inflicted by God or man, as an offence *against the state*, has no concern. But it is to *this part* of it alone, I contend, that *sacrificial atonement* refers. Not but that *every* offence against the state

God's favour. Atonement, then, *strictly legal*, could have no place where a man was put to death, and was consequently *incapable* of enjoying the former, or of participating in the latter of these privileges. But that such a man was placed beyond the range of the *universal and primeval* charter of atonement is quite another question.

To proceed: Dr. Richie has expended much, and fruitless ingenuity in labouring to make it appear, that the "*Blasphemy*" mentioned in Lev. xxiv. 16., was the same as the offence described in Lev. v. 4. or rather he should have said, as in Exodus xx. 7., namely, profane, light, and irreverent mention of the name of God. He says, the offence was *two-fold*, blasphemy and cursing, and affirms that death was the punishment of the blasphemy, which blasphemy, he argues, was merely the light, irreverent, and profane *mention* of the name of God, as above described. He says, *ויקב השם* may be rendered "he *mentioned* or *pronounced* the name." Let this be granted, and nothing follows to establish his point. The passage would run thus, "he mentioned, or pronounced the name of the Lord, and cursed;" that is with cursing. It is evident, from the whole context, that it was for *deliberate*, and *presumptuous defiance*, and *cursing* God, that he was adjudged to be *stoned to death*, not for the light, inadvertent, or even irreverent mention of God's name as referred to Exodus xx. 7., or for a rash oath, as Lev. v. 4. The son of the Egyptian *defied*, and *cursed* the God

(being an act of disobedience against God, from whom its enactments proceeded,) required sacrificial atonement, but this atonement had no concern with the *appointed* punishments for the maintenance of the civil or ecclesiastical institutions, but only with the procuring of God's *forgiveness* of guilt incurred in his sight: and though the *covenanted* results of this forgiveness were *temporal*, it was, as *far as it extended*, as complete forgiveness, both in its nature, and in its reference to moral, or to ceremonial guilt, as that in virtue of which we hope for the *spiritual* and *eternal* privileges of God's favour.

The cases of unchastity with a bond-maid, and with a free woman, adduced by Mr. Davison, in the disproportion of their respective punishments to their respective *moral* guilt, very plainly prove my position, that the enacted punishment of death had sole reference to the *social* and *conventional* magnitude of the crime, not to its guilt in the sight of God, which alone was contemplated in sacrificial atonement. The declared result of atonement—"it shall be *forgiven him*," and re-admission of the offender by the appointed minister to the outward symbols of God's favour, and tokens of fitness for his service, sufficiently proclaim, that it was God, as *moral* governor of the universe, who was propitiated by this rite. God, as the head of the Jewish theocracy, and the magistrates, as his ministers, set over them for the "punishment of evil doers, and the praise of them that do well," exacted punishment to *deter* others. The punishment satisfied the state, and yet did not reconcile God to the offender—but Sacrifice did.



of the Israelite. An act of *open hostility* was committed against the *theocracy* subversive of all obedience to it. And for this he was condemned to be stoned. But, moreover, Ainsworth has observed, that the word in question is properly rendered *blaspheming*, meaning open and deliberate hostility to God's name. The *distinct* and *twofold* characters of the offence, together with the distinct and twofold consequences are pointed out with peculiar accuracy in this case. The man that "curseth God shall BEAR HIS SIN;" or (Exod. xx. 7). "the Lord will not hold him *guiltless*." Here is its character and consequence with *respect to God*. And to this, atonement in its *general* sense was applicable; for Job offered burnt offerings for his sons, lest they should *have cursed God in their hearts*\*. But the words which follow, no less clearly discriminate the *other* character of the offence, its *tendency to subvert the Jewish polity*, and its consequent liability to civil punishment.

"He that blasphemeth" (that is, he that curseth God not in his heart, but suffers his enmity to God to break out into the *overt act* of defiance,) "he shall surely be put to death," &c.

He both *bore his sin*, and also suffered *exemplary* punishment to maintain the *authority of the State*. Yet in the latter case he did not suffer death, *because* there was no atonement. But no *legal* atonement (for the reasons already mentioned) could be appointed, since he was sentenced to death.

That, in case of his having means of sincere repentance before the infliction of his sentence, he was (any more than the *other*, who did not suffer *signal death*) without the range of the primeval charter of atonement, *figured* perhaps *under* the law by the great annual expiation, but really founded on the Sacrifice of Christ, is more than I would affirm, and more I think than any man would be justified in affirming, who has compared Levit. xvii. 11. with Gen. ix. 5., and who has considered the whole connection of that chain of mercy and salvation, which unites the fall of the first to the triumph of the last Adam.

The second position of the learned Prelate is, that the argument, he is opposing, is *sophistical*. The following are his words upon this head.

II. "It is *sophistical*; for from the circumstances of atonement not being appointed in those cases in which death was peremptorily denounced, it is inferred, that no atonement could be made where life was forfeited; whereas the true

\* Job i. 5.

statement of the proposition evidently is, that life was forfeited where no atonement was permitted to be made. It is true, indeed, that death is not expressly denounced, in those cases, in which atonements were allowed; but this was *because* the atonement was permitted to arrest the sentence of the law, as appears particularly from this, that where the prescribed atonement was not made, the law, no longer suspended in its natural operation, pronounced the sentence of death. The real nature of the case seems to be this; the rigid tendency of the law being to secure obedience, on pain of forfeiture of life; all such offences as were of so aggravated a kind as to preclude forgiveness, were left under the original sentence of the law, whilst such as were attended with circumstances of mitigation, were forgiven on the condition of a public and humble acknowledgment of the offence, by complying with certain prescribed modes of atonement. It should be remembered also, that the law was not given at different times, so as that its denunciations and atonements should be promulgated at different periods; both were announced at the same time, and therefore in such cases as admitted of pardon, the penalty being superseded by the atonement, the punishment strictly due to the offence is consequently not denounced, and can only be collected now from the general tendency of the law, from some collateral bearings of the Mosaic code, or from the inflictions which actually followed on the neglect of the atonement. The whole strength of the present objection rests then upon this: that we have not both the atonement prescribed, and the punishment denounced: that is, the punishment both remitted, and denounced, at the same time\*."

Herein, again, the reader will have perceived I must differ from the statement of this learned and skilful writer, though I agree in his conclusion, that the argument of his opponents is sophistical. It does not appear to me to be "the true statement of the proposition" "that life was forfeited where *no atonement was permitted to be made.*" Life was *forfeited* for every act of disobedience against God, *whether atonement were or were not permitted.* And where *signal* death, or death according to the *special enactments* of the law was inflicted—it was generally in contemplation of the effect of the crime, according to the conventional scale of guilt established, with reference to the peculiarities, and to the maintenance of Jewish *polity.* With this punishment Sacrificial atonement did not interfere.

The other punishment, *death* for transgression as an *act of*

\* Magee on Atonement. Appendix No. xxxviii.



*disobedience to God, all men suffered*; and the only connection (excepting the indirect one to which I have alluded—the suspension of death, or the grant of long life to general obedience, *comprehending attention to the established Sacramental rites*) the only direct connection which sacrificial atonement has with this is, that in restoring the offender to the temporal privileges of God's favour, it gave him a pledge and hope of being ultimately restored to the eternal privileges, which had been forfeited by incurring his displeasure. The *Mosaic law covenanted* no more than temporal privileges, but the comprehensive terms of the charter of atonement mentioned in Levit. xxvii. 11. which though *under* the Law was the charter, not *of* the Law, but of the antecedent dispensation, the comprehensive terms, I say, of this charter seem to convey the promise of the future; viz. the restoration of that life and happiness which had been forfeited by disobedience. For as atonement unquestionably did not *avert* this death, and as atonement was, as I contend, the charter granted before the Law, it cannot be said that the blood was an atonement for their lives; but as it, in its sacramental connection with Christ's blood, restored them to God's favour, and thence to the hope of the restoration of that life, which disobedience had forfeited. It would appear then that sacrificial atonement, in its *general*, though not in its *peculiarly legal* character, not only could be made where life was forfeited; but was principally required *because* life was forfeited. As a *strictly legal* enactment it simply recognized the forfeiture of *temporal* privileges of God's protection; and was the appointed medium of their *restoration*.

In the third remark of Archbishop Magee, that the argument of Sykes and Taylor is altogether impertinent, and inapplicable, I fully concur. That the import both of the legal, and Christian Sacrifices was vicarious, as he has defined it, cannot, I think, with the least shew of reason, be disputed. The only point, in which I dissent from the Archbishop here, is in the *sense*, in which *according* to the tenor of his *arguments*, he seems to have used the term "*release*" in his definition.

He says, that "the offering of the animal slain in Sacrifice may be considered vicarious," as "representing the penal effects of the offerer's demerits, and his *release* from the deserved punishment in consequence of the death of the victim."

Now the view which this learned author has taken of the

texts we have examined, seems to rest upon the notion that Sacrifice *averted* the penalty of transgression; and therefore in this sense he appears to use the word "*release*". But it is evident, that even the *purely* legal atonements did not *avert* the consequences of transgression, but strictly speaking *released* the offender from them. The moment he committed the crime, he *had forfeited* God's favour, and he *was unfit* for the tabernacle service, but atonement *RESTORED* him to both. In like manner the general charter (*before, and not annulled by the law*) of atonement for life did not *avert* death, but led, when offered by faith, to the *RESTORATION* of life\*. The same characteristic feature is plainly discernible in that GREAT ATONEMENT, from their relation to which, the typical offerings both before, and of the law, had derived their *respective* efficacy. The SACRIFICE OF CHRIST did not *avert* death; it procured the *RESTORATION* of life, and favour. "As in Adam ALL die, even so in Christ shall all be MADE ALIVE†." "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a QUICKENING (ζωοποιον) spirit‡."

The vicarious nature of Christ's Sacrifice is declared beyond all question in the New Testament. The import of terms such as these cannot be misunderstood. Την ψυχην αυτου λυτρον αντι πολλων, Matt. xx. 28. αντιλυτρον, 1 Tim. ii. 6. ελυτρωθητε. 1 Pet. i. 18. εξηγορησε, Gal. iii. 13.

In all these cases an equivalent is given for the life of the sinner, but it is an equivalent given to *ransom a captive*, not one that *prevented*, or *averted* captivity. The *forfeit* must be exacted, but in virtue of the αντιλυτρον, life will be *restored*. In contemplating the import of these expressions as applied to the great antitype of all Sacrifice, after observing the *general result* of sacrificial atonement under the law; viz. *restoration* to lost privileges; I cannot read the primeval charter of atonement in Levit. xvii. 11. running thus, Το γαρ αιμα αυτου αντι ψυχης εξιλασεται, without attributing to it the same character, which I behold *distinguishing* sacrificial atonement, both in its legal and temporal, as well as in its Christian and spiritual results. I cannot but look upon it as the charter of promise given before the law, but *not annulled* by the law, as the "sacramental memorial" the pledge, the hope, perhaps the trial, presented to the faith of fallen man, teaching him to acknow-

\* "Thus we may observe that the resurrection of Christ, the *first fruit* of our resurrection, is the *pledge* of the ultimate fulfilment of the covenanted effects of atonement. Our *restoration* to that life and favour *forfeited* by disobedience.

† 1 Cor. xv. 22.

‡ Ibid. 45.



ledge his demerits, and to trust, not in *his own righteousness*, but in the PROMISED SEED for RESTORATION to that life, and happiness, which had been forfeited by disobedience \*.

\* That my views upon the import of Expiatory Sacrifice, under the law, may be opposed by Rabbinical authority, I am fully aware; but, standing, as we do, upon higher ground, and having before us the same source of information, there is no apparent necessity for placing unlimited confidence in their decisions.

But in offering an explanation, professedly differing from those of many able, and learned writers of our own Church, I cannot but feel much diffidence. Freely do I admit my desire, to look farther into this question. I am, and profess to be, not the maintainer of a long established conviction, but an earnest inquirer on a point, to which my attention has been recently directed; and on which I am anxious, that the reasonings (*though, in my present judgment perfectly sound*) should be farther submitted to the ordeal of public examination.

## APPENDIX II.

I cannot pass without some notice Mr. Davison's observations respecting the term  $\Delta\omega\pi\alpha$  used by the Apostle, Heb. xi. 4. He says in his note upon this subject,

"Nor is it possible to silence Spencer's argument. For if the *legal* and *commanded sacrifices* were designated by the name of *gifts*, that appellation indicates some anterior or separate character. The *legal command* at least could not invest them with the nature of *gifts*. That attribute must be derived from another principle in them, viz: the principle of *oblation* to God. For assuredly it cannot be maintained, that sacrifices were called by the name of *gifts* merely because they were *commanded*, or merely because they were *sacrifices*. Whether they proceeded from God or man, the reason of that name must be sought in the intention and import of the thing. *Sacrificial gifts*, then, they were, and not mere *sacrifices*."

This reasoning, however imposing in appearance, is extremely sophistical, and not much to the point. There is no question "that the *legal command*, at least could not invest them with the nature of gifts." But it is maintained that they had *not at all the nature* of gifts, in the *sense* which Spencer's and Mr. D's theory requires; and that the application of the term  $\Delta\omega\pi\alpha$  (which is the interpretation of קָרָבָן) attributes to them no other quality, than their being *delivered* or *dedicated* to the service of God. Mr. Davison's unsupported assertion, that this appellation indicated an *anterior or separate character* will not carry much weight, when compared with the fact, that *korban* was the *general* name for things dedicated to God (see Outram de Sac. 81 and 82.) of which many, nay most, not only had no "*anterior character*" but no *anterior existence*, till they were *commanded by the Law*. Thus the *Levites* as being dedicated to God's service are called *korban*. Is this the expansion, and illustration of Spencer's argument which "it is *impossible* to silence"?

And what are those arguments of Dr. Magee's which Mr.



Davison has somewhat contemptuously passed by as not worth notice. He observes that the apostle "has applied the term  $\delta\omega\pi\alpha$  in the same sense as he has in every other passage in which it occurs throughout the Epistle; namely as referring to oblations under the Mosaic law, which consequently were the result of specific institution, and in which no one part even of the ceremonial oblation was left to the free choice of the offerer." He proves the practice of the LXX, in rendering קרבן by  $\delta\omega\pi\alpha$ ; that  $\delta\omega\pi\alpha$  being used by them in describing the offerings of Cain and Abel is naturally used by the writer of the Epistle. And (No. 61) that קרבן "being derived from קרב signifies whatever was brought to God before the altar; whether dismissed, as the scape-goat; dedicated to the service of the sanctuary as the sacred vessels, and the conductors of the sacred rites, the Levites; or offered, as the sacrifices properly so called, which were consumed at the altar."

What arguments Mr. D. may have withheld through his apparently somewhat lofty confidence in the strength of Spencer's reasoning, I cannot pretend to determine; but till he is pleased to produce them, neither his expressed commendation, nor the additional elucidation which he seems to suppose he has given, will convince me, or, I apprehend most readers of Dr. Magee's reasonings, that "it is impossible to silence Spencer's argument," or that it is not most effectually silenced.

On the liability of this theory of Sacrifices, considered as Gifts, to the charge of absurdity, as conveying the notion of *Bribes* offered to the Almighty, I need not dwell, as that point has been already well handled by that able writer. I shall, however, take the liberty of directing Mr. Davison's attention to the seeming inconsistency, in which the defence of, what I cannot but term a paradox, has involved him. Both Mr. Benson (p. 239) and Mr. Davison speak of Sacrifices as *gifts*; but to divest them of the character of *bribes* they endeavour to describe them as "acts expressive of the *gratitude* of the offerer." But I would ask Mr. D. how that corresponds with the *deprecatory* character, which he has in other places attributed to Sacrifice, as for instance when he speaks of the offerer making "*confession of his guilt and of the deserved penalty* of his transgression, by presenting the Victim to be slain as the appropriate, but *interposed symbol of his contrition and self-condemnation*." (p. 22.) Was it then a *gift* to *deprecate* this penalty? If so, I say a *bribe*! Or was it after all *no gift*, but what he here describes "*a symbol of contrition*" &c.? Mr. Davison perhaps can answer this question.

The only sense in which God appears to consider them in

the character of *gifts*, is not with reference to their being *un-commanded*, or of human invention, but to the *cheerfulness*, and *voluntary* compliance with which a faithful offerer presents the *appointed* Sacrifice. This appears, Lev. i. 3. to be a necessary qualification to render it acceptable. It must be observed, as the Lord's Supper, and every other act of devotion or of duty, "not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver," but this by no means implies that these are not *commanded*.



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